

THE BRITON IN INDIA

*(A Study in Racial Relations)*





# THE BRITON IN INDIA

BY

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TO  
ALL FRIENDS AND  
TRUE WELL-WISHERS  
OF  
*INDO-BRITISH*  
*CONNECTIONS*

*"I cannot help feeling, the more I have heard and seen, that the task of governing India will be easier, if we on our part infuse into her a wider element of sympathy. I will venture to predict that for such sympathy there will be an ever abundant and genuine response."*

His Majesty the King

## PREFACE

From the interesting kaleidoscope of modern Indian History I have selected just such figures and fragments as would serve to complete the *racial* picture, while if the tube is slightly altered quite a different historical design would appear. It may be stated without serious fear of contradiction, that this book attempts to cover an absolutely new ground. It has thus to labour under all the drawbacks of a pioneering effort. The racial field is still virgin soil. There are very few people among the scholars of Indian history, here or in England, who seem to be fully aware of the causes and circumstances which have been responsible for the existing state of affairs on the racial plane. The *Indian political, economic, administrative, religious, philosophical, artistic*, and other fields have been reaped by many eminent scholars and research workers; and the present day gleaners have to be more or less satisfied with the few ears that have been left out by their able predecessors, unless, of course, they happen to cover new ground.

But such is not the case with the *racial field*. Here the plough has been hardly driven in, and if the present attempt has made a few strange scratches or awkward furrows on the hard historical soil of racial relations, the fault is as much of the stubborn glebe, as of the bluntness of the plough and the inexperience of the person handling it. This work may be said to be interesting in one respect, namely, that this is *the first systematic attempt that has been made by any writer, Indian or English, on the problem of "racial relations."* At least, one has not come across any so far.

The main *object* of the book is to draw the immediate attention of the *English people to the unfair and irritating nature of the racial situation at present, and to appeal to them to revise their views and opinions on the whole problem*, in the light of the profound political and other changes that are taking place around them. The fundamental aim is not to establish the principle of racial equality in the abstract, but to plead for a spirit of greater charity and reasonableness in the racial outlook. I consider this book an indispensable complement to the work that has been going on, of late, in connection with the *political and constitutional adjustments* between England and India. If the basis of the *partnership* is to be a satisfactory and a permanent one, then all the items in the account have to be brought in. *But the racial score has never been included at all.* A good many of the people have not even suspected its existence. Though I do not claim to be an expert actuary in the racial line, I am only anxious to draw the attention of others to this, and I sincerely hope that other people more competent would see that such an important matter is not left out while settling the business. I was very much interested and delighted to hear the following words from Mr. C. F. Andrews during the course of one of his broadcast speeches on India. "There is one thing above all others for which modern India unitedly stands. *It is the bed-rock principle of racial equality.*" To use a clerical simile, that is just the text of my sermon. The *one object* of the book is to draw the attention of the English and Indians to the difficulties in the way of, and the urgent need for, the attainment of this racial equality.

I wish to acknowledge my obligations most un-

reservedly to the following sources and persons from whom I received some sort of help in writing this book. To Rao Saheb Kelu Nair, Assistant Curator of the Madras Records Office, who provided me with all the facilities during the period of over an year and a half when I worked at the French and English Records preserved in that Office; to the authorities of Madras Secretariat Library who gave me special permission to consult some of the volumes there like "The Bengal Revenue Records"; to the "Ceylon Records Department" for giving me a report of the Dutch Records and other official publications; to Mr. Hammerstein of the "Adyar Theosophical Society" for helping me with the study of, and translation from, Dutch and German; to Mr. Janardhanan, Librarian, "Connemara Library," Madras, for kindly getting down for reference certain volumes like "Speeches on the Impeachment of Warren Hastings," from the "Imperial Library," Calcutta, and for many other acts of kindness too numerous to be mentioned. To Mr. C. S. Srinivasachari, M.A., of the "Annamalai University" I am greatly indebted. But for his guidance and advice from time to time, it would have been extremely difficult for me to deal satisfactorily with the topic. He was kind enough to check my list of references and to suggest new ones, and he also lent me for use some of his very rare and valuable books which were not available at any of the libraries of Madras, and which were even out of print in a few cases.

My sincere thanks are also due to Messrs. "Rochouse & Co.," College Book-sellers, Madras, who kindly allowed me to make full use of the latest books they used to get down from England and America. But for this great courtesy, it would have been impossible

to make use of the *latest books* appearing in England on India. Nor can I ignore the immense assistance got from my sister, Mrs. E. Vedanayagam Davies, an Honours Graduate of the Madras University, and Vice-President of the Indian Ladies' Association, Singapore. She returned lately from a very extensive tour through Japan, U.S.A., England and other European countries, after attending the "Pan Pacific Women's Conference," where she was the only Indian delegate. I had several occasions to discuss the subject with her.

I wish to thank particularly the authorities of "La Biblioth  que," Pondich  ry. They granted me special facilities in the matter of research. Besides giving me a very exhaustive list of the reference books in French there, they also sent me by post a good many volumes. Further, they helped me with the addresses of book-sellers at Paris from whom I got great help. I must mention particularly the name of Mons. Paul Geuthner, of "Libraire Orientaliste," 13 Rue Jacob, Paris, for looking up very kindly some of the French references at the Paris National Library. He wrote to me saying that this was the *first time* in the history of his firm that such a request like mine had reached from India. This work is interesting for the fact that its materials have been gathered *from French and Dutch sources also*. It is not possible to mention the names of all the friends who helped me in different ways and at different times with valuable suggestions and criticisms. I take this occasion to thank them all. To Mr. F. H. Rauleder, Manager, "Associated Printers," Madras, I am extremely thankful for the personal interest he has been taking in the execution of the work.

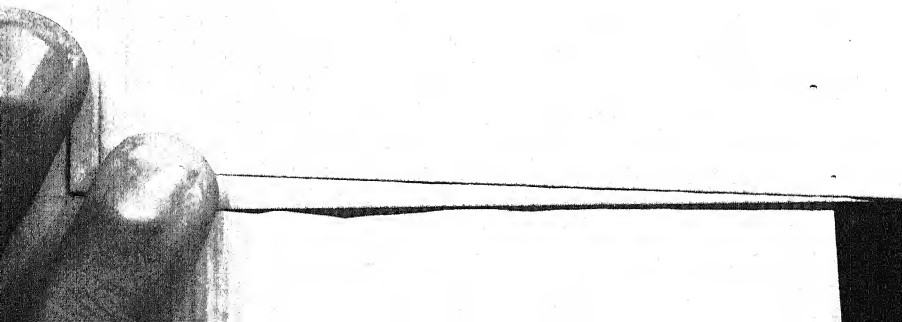


With the sincere hope and trust that this work would help in some manner to throw a little useful light on the delicate problem of racial relations which has been so far enveloped, unfortunately, in a maze of prejudices, ignorance, false sentimentalism, and jingoistic clap-trap, I commend it to the respectful and indulgent attention of my countrymen, and to the careful reading of the English here and in England. I have not accepted the label of any political or communal party. It would be the height of presumption to say that the whole of the racial field has been covered in this book. *I have only made a start*, and I sincerely hope that others more learned and competent, would see that further light is thrown on this important, though hitherto neglected sphere.

One has to admit quite frankly that the subject is a very *delicate and a highly controversial one*. I am not anxious to start a controversy on this topic particularly at present. It is only to focus public attention on it that the work has been attempted.

MADRAS,  
23rd June, 1935.

T. J. G.



## INTRODUCTION

In the following pages an attempt has been made to explain the origin and the development of, and to follow the justification, the "raison de être," for the peculiar racial relations that existed and still continue to exist between the English and the people of India. An examination of their beginnings and growth might perhaps enable one to point out the reasons for their unpleasant manifestations, and for their gradual perversions. Present day social and political conventions and usages cannot be properly understood or judged apart from their true and intimate historical background. This historical treatment and evaluation of the problem is the more essential at the present time, since the vast majority of the English people in India and in England appear to treat the racial situation as an old and quite a natural product of the Indian social soil, whereas it is really an artificial, fungoid growth of a comparatively recent date.

A close examination of the origins and the developments of racial relations might serve to dissipate the mists of ignorance and prejudice in which they have been so far enveloped. Perhaps, the process may not be very agreeable to the English people, but the manifestation of the present spirit is very galling to the Indian mind. The main object of the work is to try and show, how some of these old social conventions, usages, ideas, and attitudes, sanctified by prejudice, consecrated by tradition, and accepted by those among

the unreflecting English public as infallible, are doing a great disservice to the British Empire, to the friendly relations that ought to exist between England and India.

One is not blind to, nor ignorant and unkindful of, the numerous difficulties that surround the treatment of this extremely delicate, supremely important, completely neglected, but eminently attractive and fascinating problem. The rigid demands of historic impartiality would frequently clash with inherited and acquired prejudices, and fondly-cherished sentiments; and the expression, in a calm and impartial manner, of the strong and deep feelings that are invariably aroused in the treatment of such a gripping but controversial topic, would impose a severe strain on ordinary powers of balanced judgment and criticism. The exacting task has been attempted, not because of the writer's confidence in his own ability to handle satisfactorily such a difficult subject, *but because of the overwhelming importance and urgency of the problem*, which a good many of the present day politicians and publicists however seem to treat in the same fastidious manner as that of the parson "who would not mention Hell to ears polite."

The significance of the problem and its influence on modern developments cannot be over-estimated. The words of Sir William Clare-Lees, the Chairman of the Textile Mission which visited India recently, are very appropriate in this connection. "I make bold to say that as between the United Kingdom and India, there is no better service which loyal citizens of both countries can render, than to seek, without prejudices or pre-occupation, to sort out the other fellow's view, and to give it fair consideration." Some of the sentiments which he expressed on the eve of the departure of the

mission — something like a parting message — are also very interesting in this context. "I appeal to every body of goodwill in India to lend us their sympathy and to support by constructive contributions the new basis of trade relations which we have sought to initiate." "India will long need the business experience and business gifts of Englishmen, but these will be fully effective only in co-operation with Indian enterprise and talent." "The aim should be to increase and strengthen the bonds of partnership," observed Lord Willingdon once. The same note is struck by Sir Edgar Wood — an eminent businessman of Madras — when he wrote:—"Still closer co-operation with Indians is essential both in business and in general day to day affairs." ("Journal of Careers"). "*We have to discard the idea of the governor and the governed, and once Indians are convinced that the basis of equal partnership is being attained, half the difficulties will disappear,*" said Lord Irwin in an address to the National Liberal Club on 5th December 1934. But it is difficult to see how there can exist any free, unrestrained, hearty and honourable co-operation between the two countries, as long as there exists this racial stumbling block, this racial offence, among other hindrances.

No elaborate apology is needed for writing on such an important topic at present. If any is necessary, one cannot do better than quote the words of that eminent Christian and true friend of India and of England, Mr. C. F. Andrews, who in a recent broadcast address on India said:—"There is one thing above all for which modern India unitedly stands. It is the bed-rock principle of *racial equality*. Keep strictly to that principle and you have India's sympathy. Swerve

from it even by an hair's breadth, either in spirit or in letter, and you are bound to have trouble." (With acknowledgments to the "Madras Mail"). "The race question, I feel certain, is the most pressing one of our age," wrote Mr. C. F. Andrews in a letter which is published in "The Modern Review". (April 1935). But racial equality is not likely to be attained, as long as the existing barriers are not removed, as long as the strong walls of prejudice are not pulled down. The overwhelming majority of the people in England and in India are likely to have only some incorrect, hazy, and prejudiced ideas, if they have any ideas at all, on the matter. This work attempts to clear some of the debris with which the racial passage is almost choked. This preliminary work of clearance is indispensable for obtaining a true idea of the manner in which the present racial situation has developed.

One can multiply quotations and remarks of the same tenor as some of the ones quoted above, proceeding from responsible and well-meaning politicians in England and highly-placed English administrators and businessmen in India. While the wish is there, more or less vaguely, and in some cases pointedly expressed, the difficulties in the way have not been boldly and clearly stated and faced, either from ignorance or from a feeling of delicacy on the matter. But there are a good many intellectual obstacles to be overcome, before that happy racial consummation "devoutly to be wish'd" is attained, before the English people would treat the people of India on a footing of equality, although the slow and irresistible logic of modern developments, domestic and international, is slowly operating in the same direction. While adjustments are inevitable and imperative in the political sphere,

and in the administrative, economic, military and other spheres — and some of these are going on now — behind all, pervading all, and influencing all, — and in some cases arresting all — there remains the fundamental and thorny question of racial adjustments. The degree of lasting success that might be secured in the other spheres would, to a very large extent, depend on the new, courageous, immediate, and unprejudiced reapproach to, and the speedy and satisfactory solution of, this racial problem. “But the future harmony of India, and the worth while of their (English) remaining, must mainly depend on whether their presence is regarded as an evil necessity or a boon,” — and under existing conditions it is hard to resist the temptation to view it in the former light, though there is no reason why it should be so — “in other words, in their capacity to reform their attitude of mind and to cease repining for the “good old days when a Sahib was a Sahib,” as Mr. Robert Byron very aptly remarks in his admirable book, “An Essay on India.” “The whole question of India was one of immense difficulty.” . . . . . “The majority of them at any rate were fully aware of their responsibilities in this matter. They cared for the Empire, for the future of India, and for the good name of this country,” — apparently not so much for the good name of the Englishmen in India — said Mr. Chamberlain once in an address to the Conservatives. It is with the political difficulties of the problem that the governments in England and India are primarily concerned, and it is not at all likely they would be thoroughly acquainted with, or in a position to offer a solution to, the pressing social and racial question.

There is always the danger in dealing with most of the Indian questions, that there is no clear differentiation between the immediate difficulties and the lasting and fundamental ones. "The unchanging East" is only a historic myth at present. "This tendency to change produces difficulties in the governance of India," wrote Sir Richard Temple in 1880. Warning the English about the danger of cherishing antiquated conceptions, this far-sighted Anglo-Indian administrator adds:—"Those who are conversant with the country must by the study of current events strive to march abreast of Indian progress, to keep pace with the advancing tide of change in the East. The possession of India by England involves grave responsibilities and comprises recondite problems. Consequently, the attention of Englishmen is excited, and their conscience is stirred with emotion transcending the patriotic pride with which the Indian Empire is regarded. But amidst the distractions of English life such attention and emotions are spasmodic instead of being continuous. Nevertheless continuity of thoughtfulness is essential, because under British rule India is changing with a rapidity of which Eastern nations seldom afford an example. Immutability has hitherto been the characteristic of India, and is still so in many respects, but in many other matters mutability is rather to be attributed to the country and its people. . . . But under the plastic touch of Western civilisation, the face of the land, the economic conditions of the country are undergoing modifications, and religious ideas, the moral sentiments, the social habits, the political aspirations of many classes of the people, are changing fast," remarked that discerning writer and statesman. "In politics two years



is an eternity," remarked Disraeli, and it is also applicable to the changing Indian conditions. So the need for revision of opinions, for the adaptation of views to the requirements of altered circumstances, is indispensable. "In the East they are constant in all things," wrote Sir John Chardin in 1686. It may be true of the seventeenth century conditions, and even of the twentieth century in certain matters; but it is inapplicable to the present political and economic and racial tendencies. The words of Major Bell are of particular appropriateness in this connection. "It is difficult to speculate freely on the political prospects and possibilities of our Indian Empire without the danger of incurring the character of an alarmist or a pretended prophet." So also, it is difficult to describe the racial relations between the two countries without incurring the risk of offending the susceptibilities of the parties concerned.

With this somewhat desultory and apologetic introduction showing the peculiar difficulties which face one in the treatment of this question, as well as the extreme significance and urgency of the matter, one may proceed with the narrative. The situation is rendered more delicate by the fact, that so far as the writer is aware of, no attempt has been made, either through ignorance, or indifference, or over-sensibility to treat the problem from the Indian view. A few spokesmen of western ideas have intermittently appeared. There are, of course, many scattered allusions to the topic in the writings of the eighteenth and nineteenth century travellers and administrators, and missionaries, and lady correspondents and residents, which are merely the records of their impression — most of them formed by direct personal obser-

vation, — and a few from the reports of earlier residents or from other indirect and occasionally unreliable sources.

## CHAPTER I

### *The situation at the beginning of English connections with India in the Seventeenth and early part of the Eighteenth Centuries*

"The contact of two races so dissimilar in character, in culture, and in institutions, as the English and the Indian, raises the problem of the contact of cultures in its most acute forms," observes Mr. Spear in his admirable work, "The Nabobs." This problem is always present whenever there is conquest and absorption, or gradual settlement and peaceful assimilation. In earlier epochs it had been an interesting, though perhaps not such an important one, as the modern problem. But the difference is only one of degree, and since the days when the Aryans first penetrated through the northern sluice-gates and spread into the Gangetic valley, this racial question has been existing in India. The coming in of strange tribes like those of the Scythians and the Parthians, the Huns, and later on the Mohammedans, has resulted in shaking rudely the foundations of Indian society. The process of readjustment in all these cases extended over a considerable span of time. A similar tendency is also apparent in the various migrations and conquests in Europe and in other parts of Asia. When two races or tribes, separated by a wide gulf in the conditions of their culture and in the level of their social and political organisation are thrown together, the result will be either complete extermination of the vanquished, or

absorption and mixture. When the level of culture is not radically different the process of adjustment may be more simple. In India the problem was complicated by the following factors:

1. The strangeness of the environment.
2. The differences in the national character of the two groups.
3. The differences in their social and political institutions.

To the English, the eastern environment was utterly strange. Their habits of daily life, their diet, dress, amusements, and all the other social interests, recreations, and amenities of life were completely foreign, and had nothing to do with those of the Indians, or as some of them preferred to call them, the "natives." The Indian natural scenery also was not of the kind and variety to which the Englishmen had been familiar with in their native land.

This strangeness of the physical environment was accentuated by the fact that the social institutions concerning marriage and caste and other matters were utterly dissimilar. Nor did the fundamental differences in the character of the prominent sections of the Indian population with whom the English were brought into daily contact in any way help the situation. The Hindus, perhaps from a long period of submission to a foreign yoke, as well as from the etiolating effects of a fatalistic philosophy, had become extremely tolerant or even indifferent, in their attitude towards these strangers in their midst. Thus the variegated mosaic of Indian social life contained picturesque specimens of different designs. Just as the Hindu Pantheon had admitted into its fold strange deities from foreign sources, so too its social framework did

not reject the foreign contributions, though they were assigned a distinct place, removed from any polluting contact with the orthodox scheme of things. Though this facile cosmopolitanism was evident on the surface of Hindu social life, there was also running side by side all along, a strong current which rendered any complete fusion with the indigenous social stream an utter impossibility. The microscopic division of the Hindu society into innumerable castes, mutually exclusive, if not occasionally antagonistic, which removed all chances of social equality, made the Hindu religion and its practices as "socially exclusive as it was communally intolerant." The foreign element might be allowed to float in the placid, stagnant Indian waters, but it could be never absorbed. "Foreign communities could be amongst, but not of the Hindus."

While the Hindu religious and social customs of the period thus precluded the possibility of an intimate association between the Europeans and the Hindus, the outlook of the Mohammedans for different reasons partook of the same parochial nature. With the pride of a conquering race, they looked with indifference, if not contempt, on the few foreign adventures who maintained a very precarious foothold on the sea coast. The English were not brought into direct contact with the Mohammedans in the early period. Occasionally they sent embassies to the Sultan of Golconda, or to the Moghul Emperor, or to the Nawab of Bengal. Nor were the Moghul governors and grandees likely to entertain a very high opinion of the foreign merchants, who continued to retain a slender footing in the soil, depending solely on their constantly changing favour and indulgence. Besides, the social habits and modes of life of the two sections could not be easily

reconciled. Wine drinking, which the strict Moham-  
medan looked upon with horror, was a very common,  
if not indispensable, habit of the Europeans. The  
Mohammedans considered the foreigners as idol wor-  
shippers, and thus the burning religious zeal of the  
Muslims also stood in the way of any effective inti-  
macy. To make matters worse, there was the insula-  
rity and pride of the ordinary Englishman as pro-  
nounced in the eighteenth century as it was in the  
sixteenth century when the Venetian ambassador  
visited London. If in Europe the English were not  
reputed for their sociable nature — if the descriptions  
given in the French novels and other writings can be  
partly trusted — it was not at all likely that this plant  
of familiar social intercourse would flower in a tropi-  
cal climate. The sentiment that Miss Pross, one of  
the characters in Charles Dickens' "Tale of Two  
Cities," expressed that:—"If Providence meant me  
to travel He would not have placed me on an island,"  
is a very humorous, but not altogether inaccurate,  
representation of this limited outlook. What Mrs.  
Graham remarked about the English at the Cape  
(South Africa), that "They live like the English every  
where, as much in the manner they would at home as  
circumstances permit," is equally true of the conditions  
in India. Thus temperamental differences or incom-  
patibility served to widen the social gulf between the  
two strange communities.

The chances of building up a better understanding  
were more or less effectively barred by the differences  
in taste. The convivial habits of, and the use of meat  
by, the foreigners, served only to awaken the feelings  
of disgust, if not horror, of the Bania and of the  
orthodox Brahmin. Though they had these things

in common with the Muslims, thereby providing a slender scaffolding for the edifice of social intercourse to be built thereon, there were other formidable obstacles which prevented the growth of friendly social life. The long traditions of hostility — the bitter legacy of the crusades — were too inveterate to be forgotten entirely. The Muslim pride of conquest and contempt for things different from their accepted social and religious practices, prevented the establishment of any common link of understanding between the two parties.

Nor did the miasmic political atmosphere encourage the sprouting of this delicate plant of sympathy and mutual respect in the existing environment. "Politically the English love of liberty, sharpened on the whetstone of the struggle with the Stuarts, encountered a universal despotism," remarks a discerning critic of this period. Those who had resisted the absolutism of the Stuarts were not likely to view with favour the unmitigated despotism of the Moghuls and of other Indian potentates. The earlier gorgeous display and the later insignificance of the Moghul court, were not calculated to promote a better political understanding between the Mohammedan power and the foreign traders.

To this moral, linguistic, political, social, and cultural differences which interposed almost insuperable barriers to the free exchange of ideas, and a happy meeting ground between the foreigners and the inhabitants of the soil, must be added the geographical peculiarity in the situation of the early English factories, which imposed a formidable hindrance in the path of social intercourse. The English had established themselves at small trading stations which remained

completely isolated from the main current of the political and social life of the country—a kind of commercial backwater where they remained more or less unaffected by the storms of civil strife which broke around them. At the commencement of the 18th century the English merchants lived in their factories under the strict discipline of the President who exercised wide discretionary powers over the small settlement. This semi-monastic life was entirely unconnected with, and generally uninfluenced by, the rest of the main massive tide of Indian social life that surged all around them.

There was no chance of effecting a friendly contact on the religious and moral plane. Here “the lingering Puritanism met an immense and complicated polytheism.” There were thus many circumstances which rendered difficult the adjustment in the outlook of the English settlers to the unfamiliar, and occasionally repelling, if not incomprehensible, Indian social and religious conditions. Nor were any strenuous efforts made by the merchants, naturally intent on their business and profits, to understand the Indian point of view.

The English seldom stirred abroad from their own settlements, except perhaps when they left from one factory to another, generally accompanying a caravan proceeding through that route. At rare intervals they went on a diplomatic mission to the Court of one of the native rulers. The life of the colony was entirely self-contained, and its discipline and its daily routine partook of the nature of the life of a mediæval monastery. There were very few opportunities for social intercourse with Indians on a footing of equality. By the nature and demands of their situation, the English



were brought into daily contact with the agents of the big merchants, like the Shroffs at Calcutta, or the 'Banias' of Surat, or the 'Dubash' in Madras. The other class of Indians with whom they were brought into daily contact were the menial classes — the servants and slaves — a numerous breed which flourished in the local soil then. Perhaps a Mughal Grandee may pay them a casual and unwelcome visit to see if they had any valuable curio which he could appropriate for his own use.

The Company's servants were generally ignorant of the language of the country, though the Directors had taken some early measures to encourage the study of the Indian languages. Special official consideration was to be shown to those who evinced interest in, or aptitude for, the study of the native dialects. All those who failed to make use of the native tongue during the course of their ordinary conversation were liable to be fined. There were also language schools maintained by the Company in the different settlements. But in spite of all these efforts, the corrupt Portuguese tongue, which was the "lingua franca" on the coast, was all that the most interested and ambitious among the Company's servants managed to pick up. The attitude towards the native languages is very well illustrated in the words of one Mrs. Fay. Referring to one of these, she describes it as a "fearfully ugly language, clattering, twittering, chirping, sputtering like a whole poultry-yard, let loose on one," unlike the sweet, melodious notes of the English cuckoo! Complaints were frequently made by the authorities about the inconvenience and loss brought on by the ignorance of the language by the factors. It was only natural that the horizon of friendship and familiar intercourse

during those days was confined to the narrow circle of the useful and ubiquitous Baniyas and "dubashes" — a word which literally means "two languages." The nature of the relationship which existed between Dupleix and his famous Diaryist — Ananda Ranga Pillai — illustrates both the extent, and the limits, of contemporary social intercourse. This Boswell of Dupleix could talk familiarly with his master, who valued greatly his shrewd counsel, and he would also invite Dupleix to grand dinners. But it was considered a great privilege for him to be allowed to talk to the wife of a councillor (Ananda Ranga Pillai: "Diary," Vol. X, p. 220.) The fact that one of the councillors waived this mask of superiority was regarded as an extremely strange thing at that time. M. Delome "made no distinction between rich and poor, and treated the native on a footing of equality with the European." ("Diary," Vol. I.)

Thus a brief survey of the early situation would seem to suggest that the facilities for intercourse were very limited. Beyond the narrow fringe, the circumscribed horizon, of their small settlements, English interests did not soar, and outside its limits everything was strange, bizarre, and marvellous. There are very few traces of any attitude of superiority on the part of the foreigners, English, French and Dutch during this period. They seem apparently to have been overwhelmed by the strangeness and magnitude of the varied phenomena which their bewildered imagination was attempting to grasp and to understand; in the same way as a child is oppressed by the sudden and successively startling release of a large number of gaudy scenes and pictures. Their immature impressions had not crystallised into hard and narrow con-

ceptions and dogmatic opinions. Familiarity breeds contempt is as true of the experience of an individual as that of the psychology of a class or group.

Nor were the conditions exactly similar at the different commercial centres. At Bombay, from the very early times, this feeling of exclusiveness had no congenial environment for further development. It had to face the keen competition of Surat, both from the foreign merchants, as well as from the English. At Surat, the English again found themselves in the midst of a rich and populous city under a foreign government, compelled to battle incessantly for their privileges — one among the many competitors for the trade of the locality; one of the ardent suitors for the coveted hand of the rich sable Indian Heiress. They were absolutely at the mercy of the Moghuls, completely dependent on the goodwill of the provincial governors. The early factory records abound in references to the manifold hardships which the English settlers were compelled to suffer. All the long catalogue of difficulties which Shakespeare so admirably enumerates in "Hamlet,"

.....the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns,  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,"

("Hamlet," Act III, Sc. I.)

— these and many others, the English merchants had to endure. The English mercantile community generally moved here on a footing of complete equality with the Indian. The Indian merchants were frequently invited to the dinners and other

social functions of the settlement. The humorous incident is narrated that on one such occasions when an Indian merchant was invited to an English feast, he was very much interested to see the foreign liquor kept in corked bottles and wanted to know how it managed to get inside the bottle. The scene is very well described by Ovington. "He was strangely amaz'd and surpris'd at the opening of a Bottle of Bottled Drink, when he saw it froth and fly about. The President asked him what it was that struck him with such amazement, which was not, he told him, the sight of the Drink flying out of Bottle, but how such Liquor could ever be put in." (Ovington, p. 230.) The English and the Moghul nobles seem to have been equally ardent votaries at the shrine of Bacchus, in spite of the strict religious injunctions to the contrary for the Mohammedans. It would appear from the narrative of Ovington that on one occasion the Muslim Governor after a visit to the settlement particularly asked for some of the choice kind of meat then provided by the English, upon which the English President very obligingly sent out "for the fattest pigs to be found, to the great satisfaction of the Governor on his next visit." (Ovington, pp. 143-144.) The gates of social intercourse, which appear to rest on rather rusty hinges at present, were thrown open widely, not only to admit the Mohammedans, but also the Banias, who were then a very rich and influential community. On certain occasions they dined with the Europeans who treated them with great respect, admiring their shrewd business capacity. The relations at Bombay were so intimate, that it was not altogether uncommon for the English factors to play practical jokes on these Indian commercial magnates

of the seventeenth century. The English hotbloods pretended to shoot birds near the gardens of the "Banyas" in order to draw them out of their houses, who pleaded for the lives of the birds. Unless the relations between the two communities were exceptionally intimate, it is difficult to imagine any one taking such liberties which would wound the susceptibilities of one of the parties. Before the capacious and cosmopolitan shrine of the Goddess of Commerce there was no possibility or thought then, of claiming a special privilege, based on race; no idea of demanding superiority arising from a cutaneous prerogative. The consideration for the feelings and opinions of the Indians was carried to such an extent, that the Company's Chapel was bare of all images — a concession to the demands of Muslim puritanism. Thus at Surat at least, the flower of social intercourse and friendship blossomed in a happy atmosphere, without being choked by the weeds of racial arrogance. Outside Surat the conditions were different. Here again, the influence of the surroundings is quite apparent. The example of Surat nevertheless seems to suggest that under certain conditions it was quite easy, natural, and possible for the different communities to waive the rigid demands made by ancient customs and prejudices. It was due more to a lack of proper understanding between the two parties, rather than to any insuperable racial, or religious, or social restrictions, that friendly association was not quite common elsewhere.

In a good many of the other centres, the English treated the Hindus "as steeped in superstition" and the "Mohammedans as profligate, and both as quite incomprehensible." This veil of prejudice has never

been completely lifted since. On the other hand, the Indians looked on all the Europeans, and the English in particular, as inveterate wine-bibbers. Even from the days of Akbar, the English seem to have gained this reputation quite undeservedly. It would appear that an English adventurer in the Moghul army made his service dependant upon an adequate supply of liquor. The Emperor accepted the strange condition on the ground that Europeans must have been created "at the same time as spirits." (Manucci: "Storia do Mogor," I. 140). This attitude received further support during the days of Jehangir when Hawkins joined the Emperor in his frequent nocturnal drinking bouts. The fact that the English were not so particular about the observance of their religious rites and practices, as some of the other European nations, like the Portuguese and the Dutch, only served to confirm this superficial impression.

In sartorial fashions also no attempt was made to reproduce the conditions of the West. The swing of the social pendulum on the other hand seems to have been in the opposite direction. The early settlers had no prejudices to the adoption of the prevailing mode of dress in India. They wore "bunyan" coats and "Moormen's" trousers in their houses as a matter of course, and even occasionally appeared in public, according to the observations of Dr. Fryer. (Fryer, "New Account of the East Indies," p. 38.) In the Masulipatam "Consultations" we have references to the practice of some of the members appearing at the council meeting in this unconventional dress, which might awaken the jealousy of modern prestige-obsessed civilians and businessmen appearing in their full dress and looking through the office files in an awful sweat of

perspiration! Towards the close of the 17th century the authorities seem to have viewed with disfavour such strange fashions in dress on the part of their servants, and they even directed those at Masulipatam who were guilty of wearing such heterodox costume, particularly on Sundays; "not to lounge or parade on Sundays in loose coats," as can be seen from the information given in Streynsham Master's "Diaries." A meeting of the council took place at Calcutta in this dress, but as a full official dress it was not destined to become permanently popular, though as an indoor wear it remained in fashion during the 18th century and even to a considerable part of the 19th century.

Thus the position throughout the seventeenth and the greater part of the eighteenth century betrayed no symptoms of unwarranted superiority on the part of the Europeans. Separation and difference and even disapproval existed in thought and action; but the chill blasts of contempt and scorn had not destroyed the tender plant of social intercourse. In the apt words of a keen observer of the changing conditions, "The difference between European and Hindu outlook was too great, the prejudices of Mussalmans were too deep-rooted, for either race to have any great attraction for the other, but there was in it no trace of racial feeling or talk of inferiority." This statement is borne out by the testimony of some of the foreign travellers who have left behind records of their impressions. Both Bernier and Manucci thoroughly expose the inherent rottenness of the Moghul Empire, yet neither objected to living in the ordinary manner amongst, and even taking service under, the Moghuls. The early embassies of Sir F. Norris to the court of Aurangazib, and

of Surman to that of Farrukhshyar, show the greatest respect towards the country powers.

Even as late as the year 1760, European servants like Macdonald, with a full share of racial pride, mixed familiarly with the different classes of servants, Parsis, Mohammedans, and Portuguese. Though the opinions which the two sections entertained towards each other were mostly based on prejudice and imperfect information, still there are very few traces of any morbid feeling of racial pre-eminence. Europeans and Indians disapproved of each other's customs and social practices, but "pride had not been sanctified by science, nor prejudice consecrated by fanaticism." The fascinating novelty of the Indian outlook had not worn off, and the general contour of the political landscape of India was hardly such as to encourage any such untenable presumption. The deadly night-shades of racial aloofness had not spoiled the attractiveness and fragrance of the early English social gardens.

Nor was the expression and maintenance of any claims to superiority easy and feasible under the existing conditions. The English had to face the opposition from other nationalities, who were more or less similarly situated as they were. Besides, the Company had to meet the serious menace from the insidious attacks of English interlopers. In actual numbers they were almost negligible. In the various tiny settlements, the English factors had to maintain a precarious foothold, exposed to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." The philosophy of conscious racial superiority had not been aggressively held. It was only a nebulous belief which had not been elevated into the position of an unquestionable racial dogma.



## CHAPTER II

### *The State of affairs during the days of Warren Hastings*

Meanwhile there were historical forces and tendencies slowly operating from different directions and sources which tended to widen the social gulf. With the striking change in the political position of the East India Company towards the middle and later half of the eighteenth century, the nature of the social relations also underwent a corresponding, though perhaps unobserved, change. With the extension of territory, the task of building up a suitable administrative edifice became imperative. The mercantile interests and functions came to be overlaid, and later on obscured, by the new and unfamiliar administrative duties which the expansion of territory gradually entailed. The quill was replaced by the sword, and the ledger by the office files and "blue-books."

Further, the thin racial rivulet was slowly reinforced by other currents as well. The number of Englishmen in India began to increase very very slowly perhaps, but steadily, "first as soldiers and then as administrators and traders." The result was happy in some respects, but unfortunate in others. While increase in the contact with, and knowledge of, Indian conditions tended to stimulate their interest and sympathy in Eastern themes; side by side, a growing contempt for everything Indian as irrational, barbaric, superstitious and characteristic of an inferior civilisation, "froze the

genial current of their soul." The situation was not entirely dissimilar to what Gibbon describes in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" so admirably. Referring to the attitude of the ruling classes Gibbon says: "The policy of the Emperors, and the Senate, as far as it concerned religion was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and by the habits of the superstitious part of their subjects. The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful. Thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord." To the English merchants of those days all the different religious systems in India were equally strange and incomprehensible, and it was as a result of the writings and remarks of some early ignorant and misguided missionaries that the impression grew up, that the pagan religions were almost irredeemable in their monstrous beliefs and superstitions. The eighteenth century merchants had neither contempt nor appreciation for the native religious systems, since they had very little to do with them directly.

While the general result of the English contact with the Hindu and Mohammedan aristocracy was to bring about a better understanding between the two parties, the fact that in the Presidency towns of Madras, Calcutta, and to some extent in Bombay, they were thrown more into the society of the servile classes, — the butler, the gardener, the "Hukkabardar," etc., the innumerable retinue of swollen and sometimes extravagant establishments, — produced some entirely different and unexpected consequences. The period of mutual understanding, quite apparent during the third quarter

of the eighteenth century, from 1760-1785 roughly, synchronised with the administration of Warren Hastings, to which Sir John Seeley refers as the "Brahminising Period." During this period we come across the names of such eminent oriental scholars like James Forbes, Colonel Palmer, and the distinguished Sir William Jones, the Founder of the Royal Asiatic Society, and Warren Hastings himself. A few remarks made by that versatile genius, William Jones, are worth recalling now. "I jabber Sanskrit every day with Pandits," wrote Sir William Jones to Sir John Macpherson. ("Memoirs of Sir William Jones," p. 343.) Some of the English at present may stammer a few Hindustani words to their servants. "My principal amusement is botany and conversation with Pandits," wrote Sir William Jones to Warren Hastings on 20th October 1791. His interest in things Eastern was so absorbing that he could write to Sir John Shore, the Governor-General, "I am glad Jayadeva (Gita Govind or the Songs of Jayadeva) pleases you." (June 9, 1789). So intensely interested was he in things eastern that it even threatened to interfere with his regular correspondence. Writing to one of his friends, George Hardyngeon, on February 22, 1786, he says, "The immeasurable field that lies before me in the study of Sanskrit, and of Hindu Jurisprudence — the Arabic laws are familiar to me — compels me to suspend any intention of corresponding regularly with those whom I love." In 16th August 1787, he writes to Sir John Shore, "I have more Brahmin teachers than I can find time to hear." It would be interesting to hear what a modern civilian or missionary or a businessman will have to say on the matter. A few of them seem to know more Hindustani or Tamil

or other Indian languages than they could find occasion for use! I am not judging everyone by the standards of Jones. But the vast majority among the English seem to condemn Indian learning like Macaulay. To Sir John Macpherson he wrote again:—"By rising before the sun, I allot an hour everyday to Sanskrit, and am charmed with knowing so beautiful a sister as Latin and Greek" (Sir W. Jones to Sir J. Macpherson, November 1786, Calcutta). Comparing the knowledge of the classics of Sir William Jones and of Dr. Parr, De Quincey says:—"Jones has all the air of the genuine antique: Parr's is villainous." ("Works of De Quincey," edited by Prof. Masson, Vol. V, p. 140). The same is more or less true to his knowledge of Indian classics.

But it is rather doubtful if a good many of the present English people could recognise the affinity. What Sir William Jones mentioned on another occasion might perhaps afford an explanation for this lack of interest in the Indian classics. "The Hindu and the Mohammedan laws are locked up for the most part in two very different languages, Sanskrit and Arabic which few Europeans will ever learn, because neither of them will lead to any advantage in wordly pursuits." (Jones to Cornwallis). "I never was unhappy in England, it was not in my nature to be so, but I never was happy till I was settled in India," wrote he on another occasion. To most of the English people the order is completely reversed, and India is invariably a "Land of Regrets." The last expression recalls a humorous speech of Mr. Hilton Brown, I.C.S., who is very well known to the readers of the "Hindu"—the leading newspaper of South India—for his pungent wit and humour—on the occasion of the

Annual Dinner of the Caledonian Society, two years before. "Why is this Land we live, called the "Land of Regrets?" Whose are the regrets? Does it regret us or do we regret it? Do we regret having to go away. I think, gentlemen, it must be the latter. . . . It is a good land, take it by and large, and I am glad to have lived in it, and proud to have lived in it." In his characteristic way he continues, "There will come a day when we will live in it no more. That must mean that we are dead, or that we are living somewhere else. In the former event I cannot tell you what will happen, except that, if the worst comes to the worst, we shall have had good at times and occasionally some good practice out here. In the latter case I will tell you a thing that will happen quite frequently, and that is that we will wish we were back in India." It was in the same manner that the Governor responded to the toast when he (Sir George Stanley) remarked:—"Nothing can rob me of the priceless possession of four extremely happy years." The lady who proposed the toast, "The land we live in," went into ecstasies over the beauty of the Indian scenery. "What a wonderful land it is! We who are proud of Scottish history cannot but be impressed with the hoary antiquity of the history of India." "When the Scotch nation was but a tiny seed, deep in the mighty womb of Time, India was a full grown nation proudly conscious of the superiority of her Aryan civilisation. We who love and take pride in our little island, with its mountains and rivers and lochs, are silent before the majesty of Kanjanjunga, and we look in wonder and admiration on some of India's mighty rivers. And then there is the India we read of and loved as children." It is interesting to be told that there was a time when India

was liked by them. Whether they have suffered the change which the Apostle mentions in the "Epistle to the Corinthians", it would be interesting to know. "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (Chap. 13, verse ii). Similarly, when the English and Scotch men and women thought of India in their childhood the image was something different. "How we revelled in the colour and glamour of it all, and hoped to see it with our own eyes" — though in some cases the vision of the "infra-brown" rays seems to have spoiled the scene later! "Yes, there is something about this land," continued the speaker in fit of utter frankness, "that catches our imagination and grips our interest, and the people are a kindly and friendly folk whom to know and to understand is to value and to appreciate," though the serious difficulty appears to be just "to know and to understand." For some of the English residents one or two decades do not seem to be sufficient to "know" the Indians. As to understanding them, that is quite a different question. "The noblest prospect" which a Scotchman saw in the days of Dr. Johnson was, "the highroad which leads him to England." But subsequently it has been extended as far as India. Sir Walter has some amusing references in his novel "Surgeon's Daughter" to this topic. "Send her to India. That's the place for a Scotch to thrive in." Lord Curzon speaks in a not dissimilar style. He dwells on the beauty of her landscape of "extreme beauty and dominating grandeur, her panorama of vast plains and high mountains of utter desolation and soaking verdure; of cities crowded beyond belief and coloured as the rainbow, and almost within a stone's

throw placid villages which have known no change since the days of Abraham—the shepherd with his slow-moving flock and the creaking of the water-wheels at the wells.” The picture Curzon vividly painted was of a world of bewildering contrasts, of “splendid and pathetic sunlit and sombre, rich beyond dreams, and poverty-stricken beyond conception, marvellous and common-place, cultured and barbarous, the greatest of all contrasts, and the most paradoxical of all contradictions.” “The thought of India haunted him like a passion,” says his biographer. “Its people, its history, its government, the absorbing mystery of its civilisation and life, had a perpetual fascination for Curzon.”

The above passages have been quoted in full to show that even at present there are a few English residents who confess to the wonderful appeal of the country, somewhat different from the appeal it has for people like Miss Mayo and others. “If temperance and composure of mind will avail, I shall be well; but I would rather be a valetudinarian all my life than leave unexplored the Sanskrit mine which I have just opened,” wrote Sir William Jones to Charles Chapman. (*Memoirs of the Life of Sir William Jones*,” edited by Lord Teignmouth). But by the days of Lord Macaulay, this cultural mine had been evidently exhausted and only the “pagoda mine” remained full for the benefit of the English explorers! His intimate knowledge of, and interest in, Indian scenery may be seen from the following words:—“The hills and woods abound with uncommon plants and animals, indeed the whole Eastern peninsula would be a new world to the philosopher.” But then he must be a philosopher! (Sir William Jones to Dr. Patrick Russel, 22nd Sep-

tember 1786). The kind of philosophy that Sir William Jones cultivated did not appeal to men like Macaulay, and they had an entirely different philosophy superseding the older one. The letters and the writings of Sir William Jones are full of such descriptions of Indian scenery and the beauty and appeal of her ancient culture. One can multiply the references and quotations of Sir William Jones to show the all-absorbing passion of that massive intellect for Indian culture and scenery; but still a good many of the English people in India could find little here that is attractive, except in a few cases the prospects of hunting and shooting and other attractions of its natural scenery. The following tribute from the pen of one of the able judges of the genius of this remarkable man is worth quoting. "We contemplate with delight and surprise, the admirer of Grecian bards, and the pupil of the Grecian sages, led by his enthusiasm from the banks of the Illyssus to the streams of the Ganges, celebrating in strains, not unworthy of Pindar, the fabulous divinities of India, and exploring the sources of the Egyptian and Persian theology, and of the tenets of the Ionic and Italic schools of Philosophy. . . . These compositions . . . . prove the versatility of those intellectual powers which could immediately turn from the investigation of legal causes or the solution of abstruse mathematical problems to explain and adorn the mythological fictions of the Hindus in Odes which the Brahmins would have approved and" admired." ("Memoirs of Sir William Jones.") But generally the Eastern literature is a sealed book to the Englishmen. It would be interesting to compare these sentiments with what Macaulay had occasion to express half a century later. While Sir William Jones was "led by



his enthusiasm from the banks of the Illyssus to the streams of the Ganges," Macaulay was impelled by an equal enthusiasm for money from the shores of the Thames to those of the Ganges. How he explored the mines of Eastern learning is a matter which comes up for discussion later and need not be detailed here. The following words written by Sir William Jones as part of his epitaph would be of some interest for modern readers:

"Who thought

None below him, but the base and unjust,

None above him, but the wise and virtuous."

But these standards of judgment, these principles essential in arriving at a correct estimate of the conduct and character of individuals, communities, and nations have been at a discount with writers and critics like Macaulay and others who followed Sir William Jones.

During the whole of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth, the "tide of racialism was quite unperceived in the cross-current of mutual contact and interest, and there ensued a period of cosmopolitan intercourse," says Mr. Spear in his book "The Nabobs." During this time when the grand administrative edifice was being slowly built up, when the foundations were being perfected, there was not only plenty of opportunity, but even necessity, for free intercourse and intimate acquaintance with Indians and their customs. Most of the government officials were thrown back by the nature, and perhaps by the attractions of their official work and environment, on Indian society. The conditions of life were more unsophisticated. The throb of individual and communal life was fitful and slower, and marked by none of the

hectic pace and tragic instability and unpleasantness of modern civilised existence. The means of communication were crude. The comforts of a modern town life, with its many attractions and activities, were unthinkable. The lot of the Anglo-Indian officials was cast in very obscure places and corners. They were nevertheless fully satisfied with the existing conditions round about them and there was very little discontent, either divine or devilish, because they did not dream of getting anything better under the circumstances. The Englishmen were fewer in numbers. Women had not begun to make their appearance in larger crowds. The chances of returning to their native place before the close of ten years or even more were not bright. Thus the English residents in India were compelled to reconcile themselves to the nature of the surroundings in which they found themselves, instead of always bemoaning their hard lot as some of them came to do subsequently. As it has been very well remarked by Mr. Molony in his "A Book of South India," those "days of contentment," are all gone never to appear again. Along with the improvement in the amenities of life, along with the remarkable and rapid development in the means of communication, that old attitude of satisfaction with the existing state of affairs — even while they were rather unsatisfactory — which one occasionally comes across in the letters written during the early period, although there was the same intense yearning for home, had completely disappeared.

The following poem of Sir Edwin Arnold, which is a farewell to India and his Indian friends, shows that there were a few rare souls who have always continued to cherish the sweetest memories of Indian life and connections instead of considering the existence here

as kind of Hell, with a large number of black devils to annoy one.

"India farewell! I shall not see again,  
Thy shining shore thy peoples of the Sun,  
Gentle, soft-mannered, *by a kind word won*  
*To such quick kindness*, O'er the Arab main  
Our flying flag streams back; and backwards stream  
My thoughts to those fair open fields I love,  
City and village, maidan, jungle, grove,  
The temples and the rivers! Must it seem  
Too great for one man's heart to say it holds  
So many, many Indian sisters dear,  
So many Indian brothers? that it folds  
Laks of true friends in parting? May! *but there*  
*Lingers my heart*, leave-taking; and it roves  
From hut to hut whispering, "He knows, and loves!"  
Good-bye, Good-night! Sweet may your slumbers be,  
Ganga! and Kasi! and Sarasvati!"

His poem, "The Light of Asia," where he describes in a glowing and transcendent manner the doctrines of Buddhism, reproducing at the same time the life of Hindu India, its scenery, manners and customs; which was immensely popular at the time of its publication, is another tribute to the fascination which eastern religion and culture exercise over the mighty intellects of the West. For, very few now would dare maintain that the massive intellects of such people like Sir William Jones, Warren Hastings, Sir Edwin Arnold, John Leyden, Marquis Curzon, and Lord Ronaldshay, and a few others, are ordinary ones. Yet these people have been gripped by the overpowering appeal of Indian culture. But there are mountebanks and charlatans and Philistines of the type of Macaulay and his innumerable followers of the present date, who have nothing but insufferable contempt for Indian literature about which the vast majority of them are utterly and aggressively ignorant.

The servants of the East India Company during this early period were absorbed in the task of framing a suitable system for the different provinces which taxed their administrative resources and learning to the utmost extent. During this period, social intercourse appears to have been more marked with the Parsees, and the Mohammedans, than with the Hindus, whose caste system has always put effective obstacles in the way of inter-dining. Thus at city centres, like Bombay, Lucknow, Murshidabad, and Madras, there was considerable familiarity, if not intimacy, unspoiled by any of the freezing effects of racial consciousness. The compartments of Anglo-Indian life had not been hermetically sealed. In Madras, the Nawab of Arcot, Mohammad Ali, was the centre of social intercourse and financial transactions. There were many English agents dependent upon him, and he even maintained "several members of Parliament in his pay." The Rajah of Tanjore, who was educated by Schwartz, was another example of this unembarrassed intercourse. "Nabobs and Soubahs throughout India are in the habit of giving public breakfasts, and of occasionally inviting all the European gentry" — in the same way as some zemindars and highly-placed Indian officials do sometimes at present — "in their vicinity, to grand dinners, nautches, or dances, and other entertainments." (D'Oyley: "Europeans in India.")

On both sides there was a good deal of give and take. The English had long acquired a taste for "nautches," — a kind of Indian dance, generally performed by professional "dancing girls" — and also developed new ones for elephant fights and "hookah" smoking; and the Nawabs on their part experiment-

ed with English food and drink. The Moham-medans had overcome by this time, some of their prejudices towards a few of the western dishes, to the extent of relishing slices of ham which however they described by the anglicised epithet "Belatty Heron", or "English venison," as an English writer humorously puts it, not unlike the way in which some of the modernised Brahmins eat prohibited dishes under some other assumed names! Before the coming of Cornwallis there were many Indians occupying high positions in the service of the Company, and reciprocal entertainments were not at all unusual. ("Shore," "Notes on Indian Affairs," II, p. 108.)

In North India, the relations between the Indian nobility or gentry and the English at such urban centres as at Murshidabad and Lucknow, were very cordial. Even the bitter memories of the "Black Hole" left no indelibly embarrassing traces behind. Whenever the English were "assured of a luxurious and hospitable welcome, they gathered like flies to the honey-pot," remarks Mr. Spear in his book "The Nabobs." Whether it is that the honey is exhausted, or the bees are extremely troublesome, some of English have ceased to relish the Indian variety for some time, in the same eager manner. The presence of a good many European adventures like George Thomas and General Claud Martin, General Perron, Colonel Skinner, Count de Boigne, and a host of other minor meteors who shot through the disturbed Indian social and political firmament, who were as Indianised in their habits as the Nawab of Oudh was Europeanised—served to soften considerably the edge of social and racial exclusiveness.

*Influence of Women.*—While the intercourse between the English gentlemen and the Indian aristocracy, Hindu as well as Mohammedan, was fairly intimate, the same familiarity was not extended towards the English ladies, as was only to be expected under the circumstances. Strangely enough, in entire contrast to the present day conditions, the difficulty arose more from the Indian side than from the English. The English ladies during this period did not share the scruples, nor anticipate the apprehensions, nor betray the contempt, of later generations about "mixing with those whose wives remained in Purdah." In the letters of Warren Hastings to his wife he refers to his mistake in allowing the Nawab Vizier to see two English ladies, and to his anxious efforts to assure him (Nawab) that they were by no means typical of English beauty! In Lord Valentia's narratives there is an allusion to the disgust of the Wazir's son at the presence of two English ladies who insisted on attending a dinner at Lucknow. The most interesting feature about these incidents and others is, that in such cases the initiative came from the English side, and the embarrassment, if not disgust, from the Indian side, and European sympathy appears to have been with the Indians!

The eighteenth century English women had very little objection to the "Hukkah," and they were not above trying it themselves on certain occasions. They freely attended and thoroughly enjoyed the "nautches", and took delight in imitating some of the linguistic mannerisms in conversation, like "Bibi." (Grier, "Hasting's Letters to his wife," p. 262.) When this earlier freedom is recalled, the later aloofness and frigidity are not only regrettable, but to a

certain extent inexplicable, and wholly deplorable. Perhaps society at that time was predominantly masculine, and the ladies had to meekly follow the lead given by men. The later change in their outlook developed, partly as a result of their subsequent increase in numbers, and partly from the "incipient spirit of Victorianism which the Evangelical revival fostered among the fashionable in Calcutta and London." It is one of the curious reactions, one can almost say, tragedies of religion, than an improvement in one direction should be accompanied by an aberration in another. It has been very pertinently remarked by an English writer:—"It is one of the misfortunes of the history of racial relationships in India that as soon as the Mussalman society began to rid itself of its traditional feelings about the unveiled woman, European society imported fresh stock of prejudice about the veiled woman of the purdah, the joint product of the evangelical missionary and of newborn racial pride." While the orthodox Muslim party of Northern India relaxed a little of its hide-bound unapproachability, the English soon developed some of the very unfortunate characteristics which they had been trying to exercise from the Indian body politic, and in proportion as the Muslim society began to thaw the English womanhood began to freeze.

The nature of the racial relations varied, not only according to the peculiarities in the geographical situation and locality, but it also varied according to the attitude which the English adopted to the different *ranks* of society in India. In Bengal and Northern India in general, the field of social intercourse was more circumscribed than in some of the other provincial and city centres. Here the points of contact were

established only with the upper ranks of society, — with the members of the official or landed aristocracy. This arose partly from the community of interests and the similarity in professions. There existed a common meeting ground for them as soldiers first, and then as members of a ruling class and also as diplomatists. Their common social tastes also had erected a temporary causeway for mutual approach and appreciation. In hunting, feasting, in the enjoyment of the nautches, their tastes coincided. The prestige of the English as good fighters had served as the "Open Sesame" to the exclusive military circles of the Muslims which worshipped, more than anything else, martial qualities, and military triumphs. As yet, the canker of racial pride had not destroyed the capacity for the enjoyment of the social amenities and pleasures. However, the Indian merchants in Bengal refused to be drawn into closer association with the English, the temperament of the Bengali Banias being "too antipathetic to that of the English adventurers" for contact ever to advance beyond occasional formal dinners. Such is more or less the impression that one is forced to form from the "Journal" of Lady Nugent written between 1811-1815, and that of Mrs. Fenton, written between 1826-30.

As before, in the western part of India the conditions were somewhat different, and the atmosphere was not so hostile to the cultivation of friendly understanding. The Parsees had in their employ a considerable number of Englishmen as their ship's captains, and social intercourse was common. In Suraf as many as 30 large ships were owned by the Parsees, but manned by English captains and officers, in the same way as the English now accept service at the courts



of native princes. On the occasion of Parsi weddings the English state carriage was greatly in demand, and they were also invited to the feasts. Though in the earlier days the Parsi women did not mix with the men, by the close of the century a change had come over their habit, the women having become westernised in their manners, in their dress as well as in their style of eating, judging from the observations made by Lord Valentia (Valentia: "Travels" I, pp. 187-188.)

The table arrangements among the Parsees had been also altered. Tables and chairs came into use, and wine "specially madeira"—a constant source of attraction to the foreigner, who did not come across it often, either at the Mohammedan or even Hindu tables,—was freely served. The Parsees appear to have forsaken their native dress and manners more quickly in favour of the western, than any other community in India. This convivial intercourse also extended to the Mohammedans of Bombay, so that it was rather the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the place, than any particular attractions of the community that conspired to bring about such a familiar state of social intercourse. (J. Macdonald, "Travels in various parts," p. 211.) In Western India its progress was not arrested, and it gradually developed that tolerance and catholicity in taste and judgment which was peculiar to Bombay for a very long time; while in most of the other parts of Northern India the slender stream was soon lost in the arid wastes of racial intolerance, and the brilliancy of the picture "faded away in the drab hues of racial and social exclusiveness."

The traces of contact with Hindus are generally lacking. "Of the Hindu Princes, the Rajputs were too distant to come into contact with the English, and the Mahrattas too independent and suspicious to encourage any cordial relationships," remarks quite pertinently Mr. Spear. It was not merely the distance which prevented the contact with the Rajputs, but also their pride. Secure in their remote mountain fastnesses, wedded firmly to their ancient tribal life, with their unbending pride and inescapable poverty, the Rajputs, like the Scots, whom they resemble in many respects,—remained in stubborn and proud isolation. The ordinary attitude of the Mahrattas is more or less illustrated by the action of the Peshwa who insisted that European officers attending a Durbar should remove their boots; and this continued until the 19th century, in the same way as modern visitors of Mohammedan tombs and other holy places, clad in European dress are compelled to respect such a convention. Later on, however, a compromise seems to have been arrived at, whereby it was enough if the foreigners uncovered their head. It is not surprising if the Mohammedan princes and aristocracy were regarded as more "courteous and free" than the Mahrattas.

Beyond these occasions for social meetings and communion between the two sections during the eighteenth century, there was a happy field for *personal friendships*. This was partly because of the fact that the most able and cultured among the Company's Officers did not view Eastern literature with the insufferable scorn with which Macaulay and fraternity came to view it quarter of a century later. Many of the distinguished servants of the Company

were profoundly interested in Oriental literature. Hastings had founded the Calcutta "Madrasah" in 1781. Mention has already been made of the deep interest of scholars like Sir William Jones, H. T. Colebrook and Wilkins. Even the ordinary bazaar songs had been learned from the "nautch" girls, — more or less like the manner in which the cinema-going public pick up snatches of Maurice Chevalier's songs, or of the other Cinema "stars", — who were a recognised feature of Indian aristocratic social life then — like the "Geisha" in Japan. A good many of these Bacchanalian songs came to be translated, and Carey took great pains to get several specimens of such tunes printed. This superficial acquaintance with Indian music and literature the English merchants turned into good account during their occasional intercourse with the "Vakils," — the diplomatic representatives of the native princes, — Nawabs and Rajahs. It was only natural under the circumstances, that genuine and lasting friendships should have been formed then between the English and the Indian officials. Beneram Pandit, the Vakil of Scindia, was very intimate with Warren Hastings and other Europeans. In a letter to his wife, describing an interview held at Benares, Hastings pays him an excellent compliment "as one whom you know I reckon among my first friends." (Grier: "Warren Hastings," p. 276.) In modern days also there are a very few instances where such intimacy has sprung up between the Governors or Executive Councillors and Indian officials as well as non-officials.

Nor did these friendly relations terminate when the Englishmen left India for England. Happily, there are numerous examples during this early period,

which would warrant one in coming to the conclusion that mercenary motives, or temporary considerations of self-interest, or prospects of official promotion, were not always responsible for the formation and continuance of such intimate ties. The correspondence of Charles Turner, of Scrofton, and of many others, strike this note of intimacy without any jarring feeling of condescension obtruding itself. It is also interesting to note that most of these friendships were formed not with the Indians of the ruling class. "They were men of Culture, but not men of princely rank who might enjoy the freemasonry of aristocratic feeling," and on this higher intellectual plane there was neither Hindu nor Mussalman, English nor French, Rajahs nor peasants, rulers nor ruled. Into this higher intellectual sanctuary — this "Holy of Holies" of the Muses — however only a few English aspirants qualified themselves for admission. The Englishman did not wait for the Indian to learn English before he would talk to him, but instead learned Persian himself, whereas there are many English people now who would resent it if spoken to in any other language than the "King's English." The English did not in those days insist upon a western education before a man could be considered completely civilised, but enjoyed Persian poetry and literature and some of them even tried a hand at composing verses in Persian themselves. It is common now however, to come across English people who consider an acquaintance with, or an appreciation of, anything Indian or eastern, as rather odd.

### CHAPTER III

#### *Lord Cornwallis: Lord Wellesley*

This happy state of affairs, when no formal barriers of ignorance and prejudice separated the two communities, which reached its meridian splendour during the period of Warren Hastings, was however not destined to last long. It was soon followed by an era, when the forces which ultimately resulted in the complete estrangement of the two parties, were slowly coming into existence. As the eighteenth century came to a close, it also rung the death knell of this pleasant state of affairs, and instead of ringing out the old, and ringing in the new and the true, it rang out the good and rang in the bad. The process of forming friendships which would have perhaps sweetened the path of social intercourse was arrested. The number of grand dinners and "reciprocal entertainments" diminished. Only in remote and obscure corners, men like Sir Thomas Munro, or Colonel Tod, continued to plough a lonely social furrow. These settlement officers were generally thrown back upon the society of Indians, and that perhaps explains the fact why they did not fall under the disastrous spell of the prevailing tendency. The superior posts in government service came to be filled by appointments from England. This practice which was designed to improve the quality of the service, ended from another point of view in a real tragedy, and the remedy applied brought on a new and an equally bad complaint.

"Better to bear the ills we have, than fly to others we know not of" is a wise maxim which is not altogether without its application to the conditions which are being discussed. While the desire of the authorities to improve the tone of the administration was really unexceptionable, the results were unhappy, as well as unexpected. The designs of the English "became more imperial and their attitude more haughty and aloof," is the thoughtful comment of an English authority, Mr. Spear, who has made a special study of this period. The social gulf which "diplomatic pundits" and English scholars and statesmen had laboriously bridged over during the earlier century, began to widen again. With this departed all hopes of establishing a fairly lasting link of understanding between the Indian and the Englishman. The attitude of the average Englishman changed from one of disapproval of "Hindu superstitions" and "Mussalman bigotry," and of philosophic and cultural interest in Hindu mythology on the part of a few scholars, and of historical curiosity in Moghul domination; into one of contempt for an inferior and conquered people. The "golden age" of social and racial relations vanished completely, never to appear again.

The third quarter of the eighteenth century — roughly the years between 1750 and 1785 — witnessed a series of remarkable changes in the Indian political horizon, which had serious and far-reaching reactions on the history of racial relations. There was a gradual "metamorphosis from the secluded if not always elegant life of the early factories, to the fevered cosmopolitanism of later Calcutta" — which was not without its influence on the story of racial connections. A few historical circumstances ushered in the change.

Firstly, the Anglo-French duel of the middle of the eighteenth century disturbed the dull and noiseless tenor of their uneventful commercial life. The English people after having enjoyed the brief, but intoxicating delights of war — and in the middle of the eighteenth century these were considerable, — would not easily return to their humdrum business life. Cincinnatus will not go back to the plough. Those who had abandoned the ledger for the musket, fell so much in love with the newly-found instrument, that they forgot their first choice. This breach with the traditions of the past had fundamental political and social consequences. Those whose appetite was whetted by conquest and the prospects of plunder, did not relish the unexciting ways of commerce. Some of them set their face definitely towards conquest and aggrandizement. The surrounding political conditions in India were immensely, temptingly, favourable. The events following the wars and conquests in the Carnatic and Bengal diverted the attention of the English colonists from their commercial pursuits. The English “developed from the pettifogging traders quarrelling over their seats in church, to imperial swashbucklers and large scale extortionists,” says Mr. Spear, the author of the delightful book, “The Nabobs.” (P. 23.) This transition from the ordinary merchants into the swaggering soldiers, into the Anglo-Indian Falstaffs, was a fairly rapid process. The period of change at the two presidencies of Madras and Bengal was heralded by two tragedies in the history of the East India Company in the early days of its existence. These were the capture of Madras by the French in the year 1748, and the capture of Calcutta and the incident of the “Black-Hole” ten years later. These

two incidents brought about a severe break with old mercantile traditions, wiped out the old landmarks, and prevented the formation of new ones on the foundations of the old. New social forces and phenomena and a new commercial outlook appeared. The first event led to the more unrestrained interference in Indian politics. The English merchants lowered their boat in the treacherous waters of Indian politics, and they were naturally caught in all its storms and whirlpools, though they managed to steer clear of the rocks in the unchartered seas and finally to reach their imperial haven. The second event, the capture of Calcutta by the Nawab and the eventual success of the English in Bengal, opened up the "period of adventure and cosmopolitanism which only ended with Cornwallis." Thus, the later half of the eighteenth century exerted a profound influence on the history of racial relations. Further, there was the increase in the military element. At the close of the Austrian Succession War during the middle of the eighteenth century in Europe and India, "Royal Troops" made their first appearance. The fighting force of the Company was also augmented from other sources. The consequence of this factor has been mentioned in another context. Subsequent events during later years have only served to accentuate and confirm these forces and tendencies. But the early bent was given, and the course was set, during the middle of the eighteenth century. The change in political conditions and fortunes naturally brought about later a pronounced change in the racial outlook. The contempt for the conquered races had not yet become a fixed article in the social creed of the English. But the remarkable facility with



which most of the victories were won over a disorganised Indian militia, naturally scattered the seeds of that feeling of superiority, which later on produced a plenteous and unpleasant harvest.

With the opening of the nineteenth century the conditions became more and more favourable for the drifting apart of the two parties and the rift became wider. The germs of an attitude of "superiority complex" which regarded India not only as a country whose people were bad, and whose institutions vile and corrupt, but which even ruled out the possibilities of any improvement, came into life during this period. The foundations of this attitude of superiority can be built not only on the belief that a particular group of people and their institutions are vicious, but that they are apparently incorrigible. This attitude of a vague, all-pervading, but generally concealed and occasionally militant sense of superiority, is more difficult to combat, more irksome to tolerate, than rude "full-blooded denunciations." It is this attitude of patronage, of long-suffering condescension and of forced understanding, this pharisaical self-complacency, that is harder to be eradicated, than blunt arrogance. The pride of a Coriolanus is more disgusting than the effrontery of a Macaulay.

With the coming of Lord Cornwallis on the scene, the speed of this process of estrangement was greatly accelerated, though perhaps unconsciously. While he was undoubtedly inspired by a high ideal, *viz.*, to introduce radical reforms to improve the rotten character of the Company's administration, to pull out the rank weeds which had escaped the pruning knife of Warren Hastings in the administrative fields, the general effect of his salutary measures was to widen

the racial breach. The administrative situation during his time was such that he remarked, that those who "returned to England rich was deemed a rogue, and every man who went home poor a fool." (Marshman, p. 216.) His distrust of Indian ability is well known, as much as his unquestioned faith in the unapproachable superiority of the ordinary Englishman. Belonging to a prominent English aristocratic family, with a supreme confidence in English capacity, if not infallibility, it is not surprising if the noble lord was inclined to look upon all the Asiatics as an inferior order of creation.

Cornwallis not only created a new land-owning aristocracy by his "Permanent Settlement" — an extremely controversial measure into which one need not enter at present, — and this landed gentry has proved the mainstay of British power in India, — but he also created a new governing class by his deliberate exclusion of all Indians from the higher administrative posts. He is the spiritual ancestor of the modern "steel-frame." The white bureaucracy which he fashioned on the early Indian administrative anvil, has in modern days developed into the unrivalled "steel frame" which evokes the admiration of the rest of the world. "Every native of Hindustan, I verily believe, is corrupt," was the profound conclusion of this nobleman. (Cornwallis Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 282.) He appears to have been the forerunner of Lord Morley, as of many other modern distinguished Conservative lords, — whose distrust of "natives in positions of high responsibility," was undisguised. But he did not have a very high opinion of the English collectors either, for on the very next page of his "Correspondence," he suspects that every collector was

deeply engaged in private trade—an evil which defied the persistent efforts of successive reformers for a very long time. As in the case of the land question which Cornwallis tried to solve to the best of his ability with as much fairness as was possible for him under the circumstances, so also in other administrative matters, he tried to act according to the sincere convictions he had formed. In his view the corruption of the English official could be remedied by more attractive salaries. But he was not willing or prepared to apply the same treatment to the same disease which had spread with equal fury in the Indian ranks. The possibility of creating a "Brown Bureaucracy" more or less on the model of Akbar, seems to have escaped his limited attention. Thus his specious treatment of the administrative problem had an air of "fallacious simplicity which gave it an illusion of success." His knowledge of the country was too limited, and his insight into the character of the people equally superficial, to enable him to take a wider or more correct view of the situation. The process has been admirably described by Mr. Spear. He failed to perceive "the great reservoir of loyalty, and devoted service which might have been tapped to fertilise the parched garden of Bengal administration. So the garden was watered by thin sprays of efficiency from small watering-cans of duty, instead of by the streams and fountains of co-operation and common ideals, until in our own days, instead of rose-trees and lotus flowers that had been looked for, came up stubborn cactus and bitterness." What surprise then, if in our own days the imperial husbandmen are perplexed by the strangeness of the crop that has been gathered. "Then, as now, first class character was no substitute

for third class brains," nor did innocence of intentions mitigate the pernicious effects of the blunders of administrative ignorance. The path of Anglo-Indian administration, like that of Hell, is paved with good intentions! The colossal ignorance of Lord Cornwallis of local conditions was aggravated by a serious lack of imaginative sympathy. Born and brought up in the traditions of the eighteenth century English ruling aristocracy, enjoying a high reputation for his sterling character, with an unshaken faith in the inherent superiority of English character and national ideals, ignorant of the special character of the Indian problems — which is sometimes considered one of the best qualifications for this high post — it is not in the least surprising that the Governor-General's treatment served only to aggravate this aspect of the malady, while it succeeded somewhat in curing some of the other minor complaints. Though Cornwallis like Bentick, hated ostentation, and lived simply, the atmosphere of the Government House tended to become more and more European in its outlook, if not somewhat unapproachable and Oriental in its ostentatious gravity and seclusion. Cornwallis had no close contact with the people of the land, with its governing or military aristocracy, and he was utterly ignorant of the growing estrangement between the two communities. Although the Indians later on respected him for his integrity of character, and for the high ideals of public service, and the singleness of purpose which animated his reforming efforts, the social separation went on apace. Cornwallis appears to have partly fallen under the undesirable influence of Sir John Shore, a person of very mediocre attainments and ability, who was

inclined to be over-critical and contemptuous of Indian talents and culture, whose unrivalled knowledge of the difficult local conditions was unluckily not redeemed by any glow of sympathetic appreciation and understanding. He was a typical, conscientious, hard-working civil servant, moving in the cold, passionless region of office files.

"Cornwallis seems to have forgotten," as many others also seem to have forgotten or not known, "that for centuries prior to the introduction of western agency, law and justice had been administered solely by natives; yet society had been held together, and there had been times when according to the testimony of travellers and historians, India had been populous and flourishing, the people thriving and happy." (Mill and Wilson's "History of British India," Vol. VII, p. 280). But according to a good many of the subsequent historians of the type of Dr. Vincent Smith, India had been in a state of utter degradation, sunk in poverty, barbarism, and superstition from which the British have been trying to raise them.

"The consequence of the conquest of India by British arms would be, in place of raising, to debase the whole people. There is, perhaps, no example of any conquest in which the Natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country, as in British India. . . . Among all the disorders of the Native States, the field is open for every man to raise himself; and hence among them there is a spirit of emulation, of restless enterprise and independence, *far preferable to the servility of our Indian subjects.*" (Gleig: "Life of Sir T. Munro," p. 466.) Even peace can be purchased at too dear a price!

The results of the policy of Cornwallis have been well summed by an English historian as follows:—"The wisdom and judgment manifested in Lord Cornwallis's various institutions have always been freely acknowledged, but they were deformed by one great and radical blemish. From the days of Akbar, all civil and military offices, even those of the highest grade, had, with occasional exceptions, been open to all the natives of the country; and, in the early days of Hastings, some of the most important offices in the state had been enjoyed by natives of merit or influence. Lord Cornwallis *pronounced the natives unworthy of trust,*" — how the noble Lord arrived at this conclusion it would be interesting to know — "and considered that the administration in every department ought to be conducted by the Company's covenanted servants."

The following comments of an English writer on the Anglicisation policy of the Government in India during the days of Cornwallis would be interesting for the modern readers. The belief in the inherent superiority of European culture and standards was as strong then as now. "An intelligent native" — but was there a person like that? — "is better qualified to preside at a trial than we can ever be. A native of common capacity will, after a little experience, examine witnesses and investigate the most intricate case, with more temper and perseverance, with more ability and effect, than almost any European," remarked Mr. H. Strachey, a circuit judge, in the year 1802. That may be the case during the beginning of the nineteenth century, but at the beginning of the twentieth the case is somewhat reversed, and whether it is because the Englishman has improved

or the Indian has deteriorated, or both, it is difficult to say! "The Munsif (magistrate) is in the society of the parties, and they cannot easily deceive him. But if the cause comes before the Zillah Judge, besides the inevitable delay and expense at the outset, the conditions of the case are probably entirely changed; intrigues and counter-complaints occur, the most impudent falsehoods are advanced with impunity, and, in the end, perhaps an erroneous decision is passed. But who shall distinguish between mistake and imposture? *What English judge can distinguish the exact truth among the numerous inconsistencies of the natives he examines? how often do these inconsistencies proceed from causes very different from those suspected by us? how often from simplicity, from fear, embarrassment in the witness? how often from our own ignorance and impatience?*" (H. Stratchey, "Fifth Report of Select Committee," p. 541.) "If we pay the same price for integrity we shall find it as readily amongst the natives as Europeans," observed Sir Thomas Munro, who knew well what he was talking about. But since this pearl of administrative integrity was easily obtainable, could be picked up indiscriminately, from the English ranks, they did not worry themselves over the task of finding out its rare existence in the tropics!

The withdrawal of all European officers, except the Resident, from the Nawab's court at Murshidabad by Lord Cornwallis, was not calculated to improve the situation. With the reservation of all high administrative posts to Englishmen, the process was complete. The "Nizamat Courts" with their criminal jurisdiction was abolished in 1790. In the "Zillah courts" the Europeans presided, helped by native

assessors. The field for the employment of Indian magistrates was severely circumscribed, and retrenchment seems to have been in fashion even then, for the salary of the Indian judicial officers was fixed at a maximum of fifty rupees! (Cornwallis Correspondence, Vol. II, pp. 201-2.) The axe, however, was laid more at the roots of the local shrubs rather than at those of the foreign poplars! The natural result of closing these attractive official avenues of employment to the Indian middle class was to drive the old native administrative aristocracy into seclusion, leaving the clerk, the bania, and the shroff, — the satellites and upstarts of the social and administrative spheres — in exclusive and secure possession of the field; and the ordinary Englishman naturally regarded them as the typical representatives of Indian character, Indian administrative talents, and Indian culture! Some of these Indians knew well how to play on the vanity and the sense of self-importance of many of the English.

When Cornwallis was followed by Sir John Shore, whose narrow and rigid views neutralised the admirable advantage which the unusually wide knowledge of local conditions gave him, the force of this current was not in any way checked. The prejudices of Shore are well known. "Shore has many strong prejudices and a universal one against the natives of India," wrote Palmer to Hastings in 1786. Shore's example seems to lend weight to the argument that ignorance of Indian conditions is a better qualification for the highest administrative posts in India than a thorough knowledge of local affairs, such as Shore possessed.



With the coming of Wellesley on the scene the course of development became still more rapid. He adopted the tone of a "hectoring schoolmaster" which a few of his grandiloquent successors have imitated with equal success. Indians were excluded from the Government House functions at Calcutta. The actors in the Government House entertainments appeared in an exclusively English cast, in western social and racial uniform, and the Indian actors were rigidly excluded from the exalted stage. "Even the Vakils" — the useful and indispensable channel of official connection — "felt the chill wind of official olympianism." "With him the habit of speaking and writing of Indians as of some strange order of beings unaccountable in their constitutions and actions," a kind of political "helots" or "villains," to be dazzled by ostentation and to be impressed, if not cowed, by the display of superior force, "from being the custom of the Calcutta class of "Low Europeans," became the fashionable and dominant attitude of the English," remarks an English writer. Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in his "Travels" illustrates very well this changed temperament.

"We conquered France, but felt our captive's charms,

Her arts triumphed over our victorious arms," says Pope. Similarly, to what extent the Indian environment succeeded in casting its irresistible spell on the conquerors, and in dragging them down to the same level as their subjects, is admirably shown in this and other instances. The Caste system which the English began to practise in India was only the unescapable effect of the Indian environment! The Octopus of the Indian caste system had caught within its tentacles the new class

of conquerors, or what Macaulay appropriately called them, the "new breed of Brahmins." This social transformation is revealed in the following letter of General Palmer to Warren Hastings. "But little or no attention is paid to the Vakils of the native courts by Wellesley. They are not permitted to pay their respects to him oftener than two or three times a year, which I think is as unpolitic as it is ungracious. The above-mentioned gentlemen all retain the strongest attachment to you. And indeed that sentiment is general among the natives of my information. *I observe with grave concern the system of depressing them adopted by the present government, and imitated in the manners of almost every European. They are excluded from all posts of great respectability or emolument, and are treated in society with mortifying hauteur and reserve. In fact they have hardly any social intercourse with us. The functions of magistrate are performed by Europeans who neither know the laws nor the language of the country.*" In proportion as this social depression and administrative suppression of the Indians advanced, the English residents slowly rose up in their balloons of administrative and racial superiority, until at last they find it disagreeable, if not impossible, to move in lower altitudes! "The ruin of the upper classes (like the exclusion of the people from a share in the government) was a necessary consequence of the establishment of the British power; but had we acted on a more liberal plan, we should have fixed our authority on a much more solid foundation." (F. J. Shore, "Notes on Indian Affairs," Vol. I, p. 162.) What Lord Metcalfe mentioned about a century before is still true of conditions in India. "We are still a handful of Europeans

governing an immense Empire, without any firm hold on the country, having warlike and powerful enemies on all our frontiers, and the spirit of disaffection dormant, but rooted universally among our subjects."

Lord Wellesley gave as an excuse for the adoption of this attitude by which he attempted to escape from the unpleasant attentions and intrusions of Calcutta English society, the lack of taste and culture among the members of that class. "I rise early and go out before breakfast, which is always over between eight and nine. From that hour until four (in the hot weather) I remain at work, unless I go to Council, or to Church on Sundays; at five I dine, and drive out in the evening. At present I drive out at five and dine a little after six. No constitution here can bear the sun in the middle of the day at any season of the year, nor the labour of business in the evening. After dinner therefore, nobody attempts to write or read, and, in general, it is thought necessary to avoid even meetings on subjects of business at that time; for in this climate good or ill health depends upon a minute attention to circumstances apparently trivial. Thus in the evening I have no alternative but the society of my subjects, or solitude. The former is very vulgar, ignorant, rude, familiar, and stupid, as to be disgusting and intolerable; especially the ladies, not one of whom, by-the-by is even decently good-looking." Wellesley here refers to the personal appearance of English ladies and not to that of the Indian. "The greatest inconvenience, however, arises from the ill-bred familiarity of the general manners. The effect of this state of things on my conduct has been to compel me to entrench myself within forms and cere-

monies, to introduce much state into the whole appearance of my establishments and household, to expel all approaches to familiarity, and to exercise my authority with a degree of vigour and strictness, nearly amounting to severity. At the same time I endeavour, as much as is compatible with the duties imposed on me by the remissness of Sir John Shore, to render my table pleasant to those whom I admit to it, and to be easy of access to everybody. I am resolved to encounter the task of effecting a thorough reform in private manners here, without which, the time is not distant when the Europeans settled at Calcutta will control the Government, if they do not overturn it." How far they succeeded in influencing the machinery of government during the days of Wellesley's successors who were not always so vigilant, is a topic outside the scope of the present work. "My temper and character are now perfectly understood, and while I remain, no man will venture "*hiscere vocem*" who has not made up his mind to grapple instantly with the whole force of government. But it required some unpleasant efforts to place matters on this footing, and you must perceive that I am forced to fly to solitude for a large portion of the twenty-four hours lest I should weaken my means of performing my public duty." (The Earl of Mornington to Lord Grenville, Fort William, 18th November 1798; "The Wellesley Papers," Volume I, pp. 83-84.) Thus Lord Wellesley found not only Indian society, but even the exclusive Calcutta Anglo-Indian society, somewhat repellent to his taste.

But Wellesley was even otherwise personally inclined to adopt a more imperious air, and to dazzle the imagination of the inhabitants of the country by

always *acting* his part. He was a consummate actor all along on the exalted viceregal stage, and he has been surpassed in this respect, perhaps, only by the late Lord Curzon. But he was not altogether above the "peculiarly oriental" weakness for pomp and show. "To such an extent is the frigate encumbered with stores, carriages, and baggage, that should a meeting with the enemy make it necessary to prepare for action, Lord Mornington will inevitably suffer from clearance in the course of five minutes at least £2,000," remarks his biographer, Mr. Hutton. (Wellesley: "Rulers of India," 1897.) This shows that the noble Lord shared with other ordinary Indian mortals the weakness for ostentatious display which is nevertheless invariably depicted as a special Oriental characteristic!

The "Letter" of Palmer to Warren Hastings which has been already quoted above in parts, contains further illuminating references to this process of administrative ostracism based on racial discrimination which was slowly coming into popularity then. "The Head Molavy in each court on whose information and explanation the judges must decide, has a salary of Rs. 50 per month. And this, I believe one of the most trustworthy and lucrative employments which a native is allowed to hold in the company's service. What must be the sensations of this people at thus starving them in their native land". ("Palmer to Hastings," 10th October 1802.) What an admirable and sympathetic analysis of the situation! The "sensations" of inferior races are however not to be allowed to stand in the way of 'prestige,' and "sensations" cannot be allowed to obtrude themselves on the administration. From all such references it is abund-

antly clear, that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Anglo-Indian social landscape had assumed the essential features which subsequent years have only tended to stereotype, rather than modify.

This social metamorphosis did not escape the observation of contemporary travellers and writers, and most of them comment upon it. "Europeans," wrote Captain Williamson, the author of "East India Vade Mecum" — with 20 years' experience of the country, which is unusually more than what is now considered necessary to qualify one to pronounce authoritative opinions on Indian conditions and problems — "have little connection with the natives of either religion," except, of course, for business. It is extremely interesting to note that the Europeans at all times have shown no objection to the colour of either "gaudy gold" or silver — "the pale drudge between man and man" — as Shakespeare admirably puts it in his "Merchant of Venice," but only to the black or brown pigmentation of the unfortunate possessors of these lifeless but alluring metals! "No Hindus and few Mussalmans would eat with the Europeans," remarks one English writer. Lady Nugent, in her "Journal" written between 1809 and 1813, cites an instance of the latter.

Another English woman who came to Calcutta in the year 1810 after spending some time in Bombay and Madras, deplored the fact, that "the distance kept up between the Europeans and the natives, both here and at Madras, is such that I have not been able to get acquainted with any native family, as I did in Bombay. This mixture of nations ought, I think, to weaken national prejudices, *but among the English at least, the effect seems to be diametrically opposite,*" —

as it happens to them in many respects "when once they pass the Cape," as Burke puts it in his "Impeachment of Warren Hastings." This lady visitor remarks:—"Every Briton appears to pride himself on being outrageously a John Bull." The bovine qualities of some have further developed in the presence of the Indian animals, in the tropics! "Among the Europeans the feeling was strong that Indians should always be subordinated to Europeans," observes a modern writer, referring to the conditions which existed then. The maintenance of "prestige" had by this time become a dominant policy of the English, and as usual in such cases believed in, by those who had little prestige to lose, is the opinion of Mr. Tennant, who in his "Indian Recreations" says, "The dissipation of the Europeans is far more conspicuous than the insolence of the natives." ("Indian Recreations", I, pp. 39-40.) "The necessity of upholding British character"—and character had to be upheld rather than lived and manifested, strangely enough!—"had become so pronounced that "nothing short of absolute compulsion would actuate a magistrate to commit a European woman on a charge of neglect of duty, inebriety, insolence, or other impropriety." (Williamson: "East India Vade Mecum," p. 33.) Though this statement has been made in connection with the offences of the servant classes among the European women, "who frequently broke their contracts," it is also interesting as a reflection on the impartiality of the law and judiciary, when delicate matters of such a judicial nature came up for consideration. As the century advanced this state of affairs also proceeded from bad to worse. Bentick managed somewhat to rise above this narrow racial communalism and per-

mitted the Indians to drive to the Governor-General's house in carriages!

If the Europeans gradually withdrew into their crustacean shell of self-centredness, and if the racial belladonna planted by Wellesley bore rapid fruits, the Mohammedans also appear to have considered free intercourse with the Europeans, specially in the matter of inter-dining, rather degrading. This psychological change manifested itself in many curious ways. On going to a new station no Englishman thought of calling on the notables of the locality as was the practice before. On the contrary, Indians who visited them had to produce certificates of respectability, something like the demands of modern quarantine regulations, to appear before their imposing presence. Inside the law courts no sitting accommodation was provided for the Indians, in order perhaps to impress upon them the "Majesty of Law" and the dignity of its Custodians! Sir John Shore's "Notes on Indian Affairs" is full of such references. In Calcutta many of the English writers expected the Indians to salute them! (Shore: "Notes on Indian Affairs," p. 108.)

There were other directions also in which this change was apparent. The Company's servants were expected to study the native language, Hindustani, and every encouragement was given to those who showed some interest in this attempt. The authorities went to the extent of imposing a fine on those who used any other language than Hindustani. But still many of the Company's servants were so ignorant of the "lingua franca" that they could not count more than twenty, according to the information given in the works of Sir John Shore. There was no inducement for them to study the native language which



has been very charitably described by the anonymous author of "Letters of a Lady" which has been already quoted.

The attitude of superiority which Wellesley so openly flaunted, whether as a deliberate philosophy of government, or as a convenient means of escape from the vapid inanity of Calcutta Anglo-Indian social life, whereby he retreated into regions of inaccessibility, was not without its influence and reaction on the future development of social relations. "No two brothers were ever so unlike; the one scorning all display, the other living for nothing else," remarked Macaulay referring to the striking difference in the temperament and outlook of the two brothers — Arthur and Richard — the Duke of Wellington and the Marquess of Wellesley. It would be interesting to follow the views and observations of some of the distinguished Anglo-Indian civilians on Indian life and conditions of the nineteenth century. The impressions of these civilians are very important and interesting from one point of view. They lived at a time when the conveniences of modern life were unknown, when the English were thrown more directly and intimately into the society of the governed, when they had thus very good chances for observing closely the character of the people over whom they exercised authority. But the gradual increase in the amenities of social life has indirectly, though powerfully, contributed to the widening of the social gulf between the Englishman and the Indian. The present day administrators may be said to come less in touch comparatively with the real life of the people except through the medium of their numerous office files, departmental orders and other things, and that is

more than enough for most of them. But during the days of Munro, the society of the governed had to be tolerated, and even cultivated, by those who were so inclined, to an extent almost unknown and inconceivable at present.

Writing about the people of the country Sir Thomas Munro remarked:—"They are simple, harmless, honest, and have as much truth in them as any men in the world," although according to some of the present day English writers they seem to have deteriorated considerably. It is interesting to compare this with the estimate of Macaulay. But Macaulay had one unique advantage like some of the present day politicians, that his views were not warped by prejudice and by too close familiarity! Munro's comments on the policy of shutting out the avenues of employment to the Indians begun by Cornwallis and continued by his successors, are very significant. *"Our present system of government, by excluding all the natives from power, and trust and emolument is much more efficacious in depressing, than all our laws and school-books can do in elevating their character."* (Thomas Munro.) "All that we can give them without endangering our own ascendancy, should be given. All military power should be kept in our own hands, but they might with advantage, hereafter, be made eligible to every office under that of a member of the government."

Side by side with this, it is interesting to compare the attitude of Lord Cornwallis. "Lord Cornwallis had an extraordinary distrust of all 'natives' or Indian officials," says Dr. Vincent Smith. It is amusing to note that in proportion as some of the English lords rose in the aristocratic ladder, the distrust of Indian ability and aspirations has correspondingly

increased! It is generally among the "superior" English lords that the contempt for Indian ability has been manifested in the past, and about the present it is unnecessary to speculate. Lord Cornwallis, Lord Hastings, Lord Morley, Lord Curzon, and many other lords, dead and living, have expressed their opinions on the capacity on the Indians, which would make very interesting reading.

Bishop Heber, speaking of Sir T. Munro, remarked:—"He is evidently attached to, and thinks well of, the country and its inhabitants." . . . . "Munro, perhaps, was the wisest of all Anglo-Indian statesmen," observes Vincent Smith in a somewhat guarded manner. ("Oxford History of India," p. 571.) Speaking of the conditions which prevailed in India during the early part of the nineteenth century, the historian Dutt is compelled to admit, that they have changed and "deteriorated in one way. Englishmen now see less of real Indian life, and mix less with the people than they did of old." Yet, it is very interesting to read through some of the modern writers who speak of "Real India!" What Mr. Dutt said of the state of affairs during the end of last century and the commencement of the present century may be reproduced here. "The reign of affection is gone; the reign of law is come, of cold officialdom on the one side, and of constitutional agitation on the other." The change had already started faintly during the days of Elphinstone, and that broad-minded and enlightened statesmen commented on it while speaking of Sir John Malcolm. "Malcolm certainly has wise and enlightened views of policy; and, among them, the kind and indulgent manner in which he regards the *natives*—though originating perhaps in his heart

as much as in his head—is by no means the least important.” Perhaps, people like Malcolm suffered under the dangerous expansion of the pericardium by the oppressive heat of the tropics, where as it would appear as if some of the modern Englishmen have their cranium disproportionately developed, and the heart has assumed its normal dimensions! The words of this sympathetic bishop (Bishop Heber) are interesting in another way. They reveal the gradual manner in which the opinions of the different classes of the English population in India were changing, how the edifice of prejudice was being slowly raised. “It appears to particular advantage in his feelings towards the native army and in the doctrines he has inculcated regarding them,” continues Bishop Heber. *“It is melancholy to think that he is not young, and that he is the last of the class of politicians to which he belongs. The latter statemen are certainly more imperious and harsher in their motions, and are inferior in wisdom in as much as they reckon on force than he does, and less on affection.”* (Bishop Heber. Quoted by R. C. Dutt in his “England and India.”) *“It is melancholy to think”* that this race of noble administrators became practically extinct by the days of Bishop Heber, and that quite a different type has sprung up. It would be interesting to speculate what would have been the story of racial relations and of the connections between England and India, if there were other people like Sir Thomas Munro. In 1822, Elphinstone wrote to Sir T. Munro, “that besides the necessity of having good native advisers in governing natives, it is necessary that we should pave the way for the introduction of the natives to some share in the government of their own country.” Some of the modern Conserva-

tive politicians find even after the lapse of a century and more, the road so slushy that they want to have the whole thing paved with democratic asphalt before driving their rickety constitutional coach through the rut-covered Indian lanes! In 1826, the year in which he left India, he remarked in a letter to Mr. Henry Mills:—"It has always been a favourite notion of mine that our object ought to be to place ourselves in the same relation to the natives that the Tartars are into the Chinese, retaining the government and military power, but gradually relinquishing all share in the civil administration." It would be interesting to compare this with the attitude of the politicians in England at present. Thus during the days of Malcolm and Elphinstone—during the first quarter of the nineteenth century—the contact with Indians was more intimate, the knowledge of Indian conditions more profound, the attitude less narrow, the outlook less prejudiced, the relations more cordial, the conduct more sympathetic. The leading English administrators formed a vital part of the life of the country and there was little disposition to regard themselves as a distinct, separate, and superior class of people. Their lot forbade to condemn a people from whose labour they drew the means of sustenance, nor to rise to critical or administrative prominence through the slaughter of the reputation of a people, and to shut the gates of social and racial mercy on Indian mankind. If the social gulf has become so distressingly wide as to appear almost unbridgeable, that has been the result of a series of unhappy developments since, and not due to the change in the character of the people. This character, according to the Conservatives, has only improved with the contact and associa-

tion with the superior English stock. So it is not the decline in the stuff of the natives of the land that is responsible for the later developments. Such a view is quite untenable, since it would cut at the very root of the English claims that the country has been marvellously improving under English occupation. "To govern men you must excel them in their accomplishments or despise them," said Lord Beaconsfield. In India there was very little disposition for the former — and it would have been a rather difficult thing also to excel the Indians in their learning — but the other alternative was fatally easy. At the time that the people of the land deteriorated, the "personnel" of the administration improved!

One of the principal defects of the character of British occupation of India, and of the nature of the relations with the inhabitants of the land, is given in the following words of Wellesley:—"It is a radical imperfection in the constitution of our establishments in India, that no system appears to have been adopted with a view either to conciliate the good-will or to control the disaffection of this description of our subjects, whom we found in possession of the Government, and whom we have excluded from all share of emolument, honour, and authority, without providing any adequate corrective of those passions incident to the loss of dignity, wealth, and power." (Marquess Wellesley, "Despatches, Minutes and Correspondence," Vol. I, p. 536. Edited by M. Martyn.) Coming as it does from such an eminent source, it reveals one of the peculiarities, if not defects, of the English rule in India. It would be interesting to compare these words with the situation at the present time. "It is by coercion, it is by the sword, and not by free stipulation

with the governed that England rules India," said  
Macaulay. ("Gladstone on Church and State,"  
Macaulay's "Essays.")

## CHAPTER IV

### *Influence of Women*

Meanwhile there were circumstances and forces operating from other independent and often unperceived sources which had a profound connection with the history of the social and racial problem. One such was the *increase in the number of women*. It appears one of the unfortunate aspects of British connections with India, that the same cause which helped so powerfully to raise the standard of social morality among the English community in India, which served to draw the Englishmen away from the illicit connections with Indian women, which most of them were compelled to form because of the tremendous disparity in the sexes in India at that time, should have also served to widen the racial gulf between the English and the Indians. "Earth's noblest thing, a woman perfected," as Lowell puts it, came to contribute her powerful share in this racial handiwork.

"When a lady's in the case

All other things give place,"

says very humorously the poet Gay. It is also true of the experience of individuals as of communities. By a great irony of fate, the increase in the feminine element and influence had an effect in India which is removed from the ordinary. The dainty touch of women craftsmen imparted a rigid bent, a final form, to the social pattern that was being slowly shaped in the hitherto plastic racial mould. But for the con-



siderable increase in the number of English ladies, it is very doubtful, judged by the events and tendencies of subsequent period during the 18th and 19th centuries, whether the two parties — the Englishmen and the Indians — would have fallen so hopelessly apart. The intrusion of this attractive element disturbed the placid surface of European social life somewhat violently, and the ripples did not die out for a very long time.

For one thing, as the English women, as these "unmarried misses hoping to make hits" as Thomas Hood says, came in large numbers, they naturally imported with them what may be called in economic language, "invisible imports" — some of their current stock of prejudices, which in the eighteenth century was by no means inconsiderable. Neither their loneliness, nor the occasional contacts with the people of the land, could wean them from some of their deep-rooted or newly acquired prejudices. "Women, like princes find few real friends," said Lyttleton. In India, the English women found no friends at all among the "natives." How far some of these ladies behaved like Mrs. Bennet, who according to Thomson's ironic comments in "Pride and prejudice," "pricks up her ears, like a terrier scenting a rabbit, at the approach of a wealthy bachelor," it is somewhat difficult to say. Sir Walter brings in the conditions of Anglo-Indian marriages in his novel "Surgeon's Daughter." • Perhaps some of the readers would be curious to hear what this great novelist has to say on the matter. "The ships from Europe had but lately arrived and had brought over their usual cargo of boys longing to be commanders, and young women without any purpose of being married, but whom a

pious duty to some brother or some uncle, or other male relative, brought to India to keep his house, until they should find themselves unexpectedly in one of their own." In another place, Sir Walter touches on the same peculiarity in the conditions of Anglo-Indian social life. "Dr. Hartley happened to attend a public breakfast given on this occasion by a gentleman high in service. The roof of this friend had been recently enriched by a consignment of three nieces, whom the old gentleman justly attached to his quiet hookah, and it was said to be a pretty girl of colour," — both indispensable adjuncts in the equipment of an ordinary Anglo-Indian "bachelor" establishment, which the exigencies of the climate, the sufferings of the country, the scarcity of supply of eligible English girls, or the inconvenience and expense of a regular union with English ladies, forced on the vast majority of English men in India then — "desired to offer to the public, that he might have the fairest chance of getting rid of his new guests as soon as possible." ("Surgeon's Daughter".) That the uncles and relations found the conditions of exchange and sale rather difficult at times, may be gathered from the following impertinent remarks of some one at a dinner party.

"Angels and Ministers! there is our old acquaintance the Queen of Sheba, returned upon our hands like unsaleable goods!" Mr. Busteed in his excellent book "Echoes from Old Calcutta" describes the conditions which prevailed in Bengal during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Sir Walter also mentions the attractiveness of the natural scenery of India, particularly of South India. Describing the beauties of her newly settled house in Scotland, Miss Mannering says:—"I wish you saw

this country. The scenery will delight you. . . . I remember when we first mounted that celebrated pass in Mysore country, while most of the others felt only awe and astonishment at the height and grandeur of the scenery, I rather shared your feelings and those of Cameron, whose admiration of such wild rocks was blended with familiar love, derived from early association." "Guy Mannering." (P. 177.) Thomas Hood (1799-1845), poet and comic writer, has a short humorous poem, "Lines to a Lady on Her departure to India," wherein he facetiously mentions this aspect of Anglo-Indian social life.

"Go where the maiden in a marriage plan goes  
Consign'd for wedlock to Calcutta quay,  
Where woman goes for mart, the same as  
And think of me." [mangoes.

(Complete Works: P. 292).

The remarks of Sir William Jones about the condition of the newly-founded "Asiatic Society" may be also applied to the racial conditions which prevailed during the beginning of the nineteenth century. "It is a rickety child, and must be fed with pap." (Sir William Jones to Justice Hyde, 20th October, 1789.) The rickety racial infant born during the beginning of the nineteenth century received considerable nourishment and sustenance from the English dry nurses who appeared in larger numbers during this early period. "If apprehension of the Unseen is the only known principle capable of subduing moral evil, educating the multitude and organising society," as Newman says, the apprehension of the Unknown, was what determined the outlook of the English lady residents more or less in Indian conditions. "There is no better criterion of the refinement of a nation than the condition

of the fair sex therein," says an English writer. Judged by that standard, the level of attainment of English society in India was in no way better than that of the contemporary Indian society. "Women can accomplish all, because they rule the persons who govern all," goes a French proverb. In India they certainly did succeed in governing the men with a iron hand in all matters regulating social conventions and etiquette. "After Faith no blessing is equal to a good wife," observed the Khalif Omar. In India, even the dogmas of social life, faith, and conduct, were determined by the English wives and consequently the blessings of the English residents must have been more than what the Caliph contemplated! But the Englishman deserved such a precious blessing in the Indian "Inferno," to recompense him partly for the numerous hardships and annoyances with which he was plagued from the beginning. Thus women, "the fairest of creation, last and best of all God's work," came to contribute their powerful and decisive share in this racial temple which was being slowly raised in the tropics. When eventually it was completed, they became its most ardent and faithful priestesses. There is a very beautiful picture in "Divine Comedy" where Dante describes the spirit of Beatrice coming down from its blissful abode in Heaven to purify him and to make him fit for ascent to the higher heavens. In the Anglo-Indian purgatory the conditions were apparently somewhat different, and it may be mentioned without exaggeration that the Beatrices in India generally managed to drag down the English Dantes into the lower regions of prejudice and intolerance. It has been remarked about the mosquitoes that it is the female variety that is really keen on human blood,

and more vicious than the male. The males live on rotten vegetable stuff. During the social conditions in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, this peculiarity in the conduct of the two varieties of mosquitoes was partly illustrated in the conduct of English residents in India. Till the arrival of English ladies in fairly large numbers, and even for a short time after their arrival, the Englishmen were content to accept the existing social conditions, and were fairly easy-going in the matter of their relations with the Indian women and men. But with the coming of English ladies on the stage, the scene completely changed. Whether it was that the English women were colour-blind in the tropics then, or that they had too nice a perception of the beauties of the different shades, the brown tint has generally failed to meet with their approval in India. "Woman is the miracle of divine contradiction" says Michelet, a truth which is partly proved by the conditions in India. "Nature intended that woman should be her masterpiece," observes Lessing. To what extent India produced this masterpiece in her handiwork among the English people in the eighteenth century and subsequently may be gathered from history. According to Victor Hugo, woman is "the enigma of the nineteenth century." She has been an enigma in India even earlier. There is a good deal of truth in the saying of Lamartine that "there is a woman at the beginning of all great things." Not infrequently there is also someone at the back of the small and some of the unhealthy things of social life. "Das Ewig-Weibliche" — the eternal feminine — "doth draw us on," says Goethe, and in the English racial field they did drag the men a long way.

If "the test of a civilisation is the estimate of women," as George W. Curtis remarks, then one may try to arrive at some conception of the standard of culture and civilisation among the English residents in India by watching the attitude and conduct of the English ladies. "They are the books, the arts, the academies, that show, contain, and nourish all the world," says Shakespeare. Evidently, it was by going through some of these volumes that the Englishmen in Indian gained their confirmed impressions of the colour prejudice which now forms the indispensable texture of their mental outlook. "If you should know the political and moral condition of a people, ask as to the position of its women," says Almé-Martin. It is not only the level of Indian society which may be judged by this standard, as it has been done by western writers, but also the conditions of English society in India. If "the world is the book of women" and "whatever knowledge they may possess is more commonly acquired by observation than by reading," as Rousseau remarks, then the English women happened to find a good many mistakes in the book of Indian social world, if they ever cared to read it, while glancing through the editions of the numerous servants they engaged! For the vast majority however, the brown volumes have been always unattractive. The trouble in the Indian social conditions seems to have partly arisen from the following peculiarity which Bulwer-Lytton mentions:—"A women too often reasons from her heart; and hence two-thirds of her mistakes and her troubles." Hence the trouble for the Englishmen in India, and also for the children of the soil. To what extent the English people living in India during the nineteenth century would be prepared

to endorse the sentiment contained in the following lines of Thomas Moore, it would be difficult to say.

"My only books

Where woman's looks

And folly's all they've taught me."

"Aut amat aut odit, mulier nihil est tertium," goes the Latin saying. "A woman either loves or hates. She knows no medium." This aspect of feminine psychology was admirably illustrated in the history of racial relations. One point in womanly logic which Virgil mentions, namely, that "a woman is always changeable and capricious," has not been exemplified in the racial outlook in India.

"Women are like thermometres, which on a sudden application of heat first sink a few degrees as preliminary rising a good many," says the famous writer and thinker Ritcher. In India some of them rose many degrees in racial prejudice when the heat increased. "Man forms and educates the world; but woman educates man," observed Julie Barrow. While the Englishman was slowly building up the administrative Indian world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they were being gradually educated by the women about the nature of the relations that ought to exist between themselves and the people of India. "Cherchez la femme." (Seek the woman. There is a woman at the bottom of it). In the picture of racial relations also there is the clear feminine element. "It is known that there is no part of the world where the ladies are more fascinating than in British India. Perhaps the warmth of the sun kindles flames in the hearts of both sexes, which would beat quite coolly in their native air," — but this warmth however scorches up those of other nationalities who dare to approach any-

where near while they are in this incandescent stage, — “else why should Miss Brown be engaged ten days after her landing at Calcutta,” says Thackeray. (“The Newcomes,” p. 67.) But other explanations have been given for this singularly lustrous social phenomenon, namely, that in the narrow and exclusive matrimonial markets out in India, there was a constant and tremendous disparity between the conditions of supply and demand, and consequently the commodity was quickly sold off. Philip Francis, however, gives a very sarcastic and unpleasant side of the picture. “Soberly and sadly, this is no market for young ladies, and the same heat which ripens the fruit reduces the appetite, whereof the proofs are rather melancholy than pregnant. How long beauty will keep in this country is too delicate a question for me to determine. You, who can read faces, would see lines in some of them which Time ought not to have written there so soon.” (Letter from Philip Francis to Mrs. Stratchey. Quoted by Busted in “Echoes from Old Calcutta,” London, 1908.) In an amusing novel, “In Old Madras”, by Mrs. B. Crocker, there is a faithful description of the conditions which prevailed during the eighteenth century, of the matrimonial prospects of the young ladies who came over to India, of the kind of social life led by the people.

Thomas Hood, whose lines I had occasion to quote in another context, has some very amusing references to the prospects of matrimony of the English ladies who came to India. In his “Lines to a Lady on her departure to India,” he says:—

“My cousin writes from Hyderpot  
My only chance to snatch



And says the climate is so hot

It's sure to light a match."

In another stanza the writer alludes to the same topic.

"They say while we have any sun

We ought to make our hay;

And India has so hot an one

I'm going to Bombay."

When Shakespeare remarked, "I have no other reason but a woman's, I think him so, because I think him so," he was evidently giving humorous and appropriate expression to a feature of womanly logic which is excellently illustrated in Indian conditions of social life among the English. What Dr. Johnson spoke of "wretched, un-ideal's girls," may be applied to a good many of the English ladies who came over to India in the early part of the nineteenth century.

With the absence of a wide culture or outlook, apparent also in the contemporary social life in England during this period, these women found society among their own people, or not infrequently, returned single and disconsolate to Europe, when the feeling of novelty and excitement or early enthusiasm had died out, or if their eager matrimonial quest failed. "Ah me, how weak a thing the heart of woman is," says Shakespeare. But the racial heart of most of them has been exceptionally strong in India. Whether it is that "women have more heart and imagination than men," as Lamartine puts it, the Englishwomen have maintained, and to a certain extent still maintain in many cases, a more unyielding attitude in the matter of racial relations. Perhaps some people might consider it rather unchivalrous to describe the character of women like this. But when one considers the racial mischief caused by the individual and corporate con-

duct of the English ladies during the course of the nineteenth century, one cannot be guilty of using very strong language.

The peculiar environment in which the European women found themselves situated, when they were "precipitated adown Titanic glooms of chasm'd fears," as Francis Thomson says, the nature of the climate, the strangeness of the language, the utterly unintelligible nature of the intricate features of the social and religious life of the land; these and other factors, exerted a very disturbing influence on the character of the lady residents, and an ominous reaction on the outlook of the men as well, and thus ultimately on the whole tenor of racial relations. The fear of an "unknown and incalculable environment," which was constantly present in the English firmament, warped their vision. Fear is one of the most powerful, infectious, and mischievous of human emotions; an ague which intermittently attacks its victims. Fears are "but voices airy, whispering harm where harm is not," as Wordsworth rightly says. Thus the English ladies, particularly the new-comers, found it impossible to enter into their new mental and physical surroundings easily, while they were naturally afraid of, and restless in, an oriental atmosphere to which they were complete strangers. Since the limited social grove of the English women were frequently invaded by vague and disturbing shadows, which were magnified out of all proportion by the trials and sufferings of an exacting climate, it is not in the least surprising that most of them fell victims to an ever-present social nightmare. The serious difficulties in the way of travel, the comparative stagnation of social life, the greater degree of isolation which prevailed

amidst their social circles, partly imposed by the inconveniences in the means of communication, must have served to aggravate the hardships of the early English women in India.

Their influence on the outlook of Englishmen here was regrettable in many ways. The gradual establishment of English homes in India, a thing in itself highly beneficial in many respects and also quite natural, in place of the "zenanas" which were in fashion till then, had far reaching consequences on social life. For one thing, this social fact rudely snapped all the old chains of tolerant intercourse which had existed till then. The habit of living in the oriental style and entering into temporary marriage connections—what the French would call "mariage de convenance" common till then, was abandoned with the appearance of women on the stage. The fear of social ostracism, the tyranny of Mrs. Grundyism, disturbed the even tenor of their social life. While they slowly weaned the men from their old ways of living in an orientalised style, they nursed tenderly the new-born racial infant with all the maternal affection generally lavished on it. Thus the English ladies powerfully reinforced and diverted the current of racialism which was flowing unperceived in the Indian social meadows.

There was another general direction in which the influx of women affected unfavourably the situation. Previous to their arrival in large numbers, the English residents generally formed no permanent social ties which bound them embarrassingly to the soil. But with the coming of ladies and the setting up of lasting domestic establishments, the anxieties and worries of a family life had their reaction on the outlook of the

English community. Till now the gates of social intercourse were not rigidly closed. But when the English women came in considerable numbers they locked the doors and kept the key with them as mistresses of the house.

The demon of anxiety and suspicion always began to haunt the Anglo-Indian mind. Fear became the dominant note in the mental outlook. Previous to the appearance of the ladies the Englishmen had entered into matrimonial connections freely with the Portuguese women. "As long as the Zenana lasted it was in its turn a powerful Indianising influence," remarks Mr. Spear correctly. In 1789, "Asiaticus" referring to the expenses of the "Hookah" considered it "absolute parsimony compared to the expenses of the seraglio . . . for those whose rank in the service entitles them to princely income." Williamson and D'Oyley who describe the conditions prevailing during the last two decades of the eighteenth century, mention the "Zenana" as a normal institution. This identity of interests and familiar intercourse are revealed not only by such institutions like the "Zenana," but also by the imitation of other practices like hookah-smoking which became fashionable among the English settlers. It is evident even in the dress of the period. The English loved to see the animal fights, to watch the nautch dance, and had no objections to listening to eastern music. Bernier had found the Imperial band at Delhi trying at first, but had grown gradually to like it. "On my first arrival it struck me so as to be unsupportable, but such is the power of habit that this same habit is now heard by me with pleasure; in the night particularly when in bed and afar, on my terrace this music sound in my

ears as solemn, grand and melodious." But this experience appears to have been exceptional, for the English have not shown any capacity to appreciate Indian music and the experience or sensation which one of them described "that it reminded him of the Trumpet call on the Last Judgment Day, is not uncommon!" From the frequent references to the "Country music" in the earlier records, it is reasonable to infer that the merchants who came in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries did not dislike Indian music.

But such a similarity in tastes and interests did not last long, and with the appearance of English ladies on the social stage, the earlier cosmopolitan tastes and outlook suffered a perceptible change. This new development appears not to have escaped the attention of contemporary observers. In an anonymous work written during the period the prevalent feeling is very well reflected. "Every youth who is able to maintain a wife, marries. The conjugal pair becomes a bundle of English prejudices, and hate the country, the natives and everything belonging to them" — and as some one remarked, they become "good haters." "If the man has by chance a share of philosophy the woman is sure to have none." The "odious blacks," the "nasty wretches," the "filthy creatures" are the shrill echoes of the wife, for the "black brutes," the "black vermin," of the irate husband. "Not that the English behave with cruelty" continues this Anglo-Indian writer in an apologetic vein, "but they make no scruple of expressing their anger and their contempt by the most opprobrious epithets the language affords" — and in many cases, does not afford! "Those specially who while young, are thrown much

among natives, become haughty, overbearing, and demi-Asiatic in their manners" — again the influence of the distorting Asiatic environment! The writer whose words have been quoted just now has taken shelter under the veil of anonymity. Sir Walter Scott has some amusing references to the type of English women who proceeded to India during the eighteenth century. "There are some women in the world that can bear their share in the bustling life that we live in India — ay, and I have known some of them drag forward their husbands, that would have otherwise stuck fast in the mud till the day of judgment. Heaven knows how they paid the turn-pikes they pushed their husbands through." (*Surgeon's Daughter*.) If they dragged their husbands and other men from the stagnant administrative and social pool, they certainly landed some of them in the racial quagmire.

"It is wonderful," remarks the anonymous author of *"Letters from Madras,"* — and though the name is hidden the sex is revealed by the words "A Lady," — "how little interested most of the English seem by all the strange habits and ways of the natives; and it is not merely that they have grown used to it all, but that by their own accounts they never cared more about what goes on around them than they do now . . . . . I asked one lady what she had seen of the country and the natives since she had been in India." "Oh, nothing," said she, "thank goodness I know nothing at all about them, nor do I wish to. Really, I think the less one sees and knows of them the better." "See what a set they are," remarks this Julia, at an act of dishonesty of one of her numerous servants, at their "traitorous trueness and loyal deceit." This lady was the mistress of about thirty

servants, — in those days the number went up to as far as fifty in some of the houses which could afford it — and it is interesting to read through the remarks of this English lady manager of the domestic menagerie. If the servants are peculiar to India, so also is the queer breed of mistresses! The impressions formed about an Indian Zemindar which this lady conveyed to her friends and relations in England — and it is through such vitiating channels that the people in England often received their supply and still continue to do — are extremely diverting, and they also reveal the mentality of the period. "He stayed an immense time and talked a good deal of nonsense, as they all do. It is very striking to see how completely want of education has blasted all their powers of intellect." The irony contained in that artless comment is extraordinary. While the "want of education" among the Indians of the period had "blasted all the powers of intellect," its abundance among the English women seems to have ripened all the instincts of prejudice! While their profound aesthetic sense, and their delicate and discriminating appreciation of colours — their chromatic faculty if one may call it so — has always remained very sharp and fairly cosmopolitan, it did not evidently embrace in India the brown or dark tint. It is a well-known fact that the ladies who came to India as well as those who stayed in England during this early Victorian era could not claim any culture or refinement worth the name, as could be easily seen from the conditions reflected in the society novels and the "Diaries" of the period. "They talk for hours and hours without ever by any chance bringing out an original idea or a generous sentiment. Their conversation is anything but wearisome twaddle," wrote

this self-righteous lady a century ago, and it would be interesting to know how far some of the modern representatives endorse this opinion. To think of the "generous sentiments" that continually flowed from the English women of that period requires some stretch of imagination! The nature of the conversation of the select feminine circles of Simla is partly brought in later in the course of this work. Referring to the conversation among the very cultured aristocratic circles in England at that time, Pope says: "Every word a reputation kills." Perhaps he may be exaggerating a bit. Evidently, their sisters in India did not have any weakness like that, and they must have been more or less preaching sermons to one another when they met, or quoting suitable words from the Bible, as the Puritans are supposed to have done during the course of the Commonwealth period in England! "*Varium et mutabile semper femina*," goes the Latin proverb. (Woman is ever fickle and changeable.) But in India in the racial question the English women maintained throughout an attitude remarkable for its constancy and determination. They seldom committed the mistake that Desdemona made, who, "in spite of nature

Of years, of country, credit, everything

To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on," as Brabantio says to the Duke in "Othello." But like Desdemona some of them did "perceive a divided duty." There was the duty they owed as members of a ruling race to their community, and the duty they owed to humanity. Very often, the latter was left to look after itself. "Men make laws, women make manners," says one writer. In India while the Englishman was busy framing the laws for India's govern-



ment, the women were engaged in drafting the rules of social code which have been guiding their individual and corporate conduct.

This intolerant attitude, precipitated by the increase in the number of women, is faithfully mirrored in the "Memoirs" of Mrs. Fenton, written during the third decade of the nineteenth century. It is also a curious fact that at this time appeared a large number of "memoirs" and "journals" and "diaries" written by women. We find Mrs. Fenton's "Journal" (written in 1826), Mrs. Maria Graham's *Journal of a Resident in India*, and Lady Nugent's "Journal," and Mrs. Fay's "Letters from India." The swiftly changing attitude can be seen from the following entry, picked up at random from the works of one of these lady writers. On going to see a nautch at the house of "Rupe Lool Mullick" she observes that the "Natives" — this word passed into circulation in the linguistic currency of the period more frequently by the action of the lady writers — "consider it a great addition to their importance to have European guests. The poor animal who exists on rice, and ghee all the year, contented with a mat for his bed, here may be seen playing the liberal entertainer," — ("Observations on India," Anonymous, p. 149) — a rather strangely charitable way of repaying the hospitality enjoyed by a creature living on meat and porridge! Thus the appearance of English women closed for ever the pleasant avenues of social intercourse, and from that time onwards the two communities went slowly on their separate ways without even a casual attempt at acquaintance, except in a few rare cases, and ever since, the Englishman in his galligaskins had very often nothing but contempt for the Indian in his "dhoti."

A few extracts from the works of contemporary lady writers may serve to illustrate this new-born attitude. "They are the most tedious people in the world," wrote Mrs. Kindersley. . . . "They have a method of putting everything off till to-morrow. When it is found out, as it often is, that they have told an untruth, they have no shame for it, but immediately tell another and another. Nothing can hurry them. Nothing can make them angry, provided their gains are sure; the master may fret to find his business go on slowly, may abuse them for want of honesty, may argue with them for their ingratitude, may convict them of falsehood, and double-dealing, it signifies nothing; the same mild and placid countenance, remains without the least symptom of fear, anger or shame." ("Letters from the East Indies," Mrs. Kindersley, pp. 129-130.) The same writer mentions a few pages further, "They are gentle, patient, temperate, regular in their lives, charitable, and strict observers of their religious customs. They are superstitious, effeminate, avaricious, and crafty, deceitful, and dishonest in their dealings, and void of every principle of honour, generosity, and gratitude." . . . ("Letters from the East Indies," p. 132.) These sweeping generalisations have been surpassed in modern days only by the philanthropic Miss Mayo, the champion of the suffering Indian humanity! The unfortunate and most mischievous part of such indiscriminate and unjust generalisations is, that they tend to create a distorted mental image. To apply the prejudiced results of imperfect observations of the conduct of the *menial* classes, who have their own motives all the world over, to shirk work, to all the other ranks of society, is certainly misleading, to put it mildly. To

paint the conduct of the servants as typical of all Indians is a curious and novel way of judging the conduct of the whole people of a country. It would be as true to say that the language at "Billingsgate" is the typical "King's English," and that the code of morals of the cab-drivers or waiters in England is representative of the highest standard of English aristocratic morality! And yet it has been done, without its authors in any way realising the absurdity and the deceptive nature of such a process; and these estimates have been blindly accepted by the people in England who had no chances of verifying them, who were utterly ignorant of Indian conditions. After all, the opinions of all these writers have to be accepted with caution, just as in the same way one is compelled to stop and weigh the words of one who indulges in indiscriminate eulogy. That this is not always the opinion of the English people in India can be easily proved by many quotations like those of Major Rennell, the pioneer of geographical knowledge in India, and a relative of Thackeray. "It is a mistake to conclude that the natives of Hindustan want courage. . . . . With respect to passive courage, the inhabitants of these countries are perhaps possessed of a larger share of it than those of our own. To see them under misfortune you would conclude that they had no passions. . . . . The Bengali people certainly suffer pain and misfortune with much greater philosophy than Europeans do," — and it is interesting to compare this with the estimate of Bengalee character which Macaulay gave subsequently. "Tis remarked that among an equal number of wounded persons of both countries, the blacks recover in a proportion of 6 to 1." (Major Rennell, "Diary," 20th January

1768, p. 182.) "The Brahmins are very easy, plain, unaffected" people of "simple nature,—there's something in their conversation and manners that exceedingly touches me," wrote Eliza Sterne from Tellicherry—in Malabar—(June 1769, "Sterne's Eliza," p. 98.) Often it makes the English people "touchy." De Page, the French traveller, remarked in the year 1770, that the Brahmins were of "unaffected, simple manners, gentle, regular, and temperate in the whole conduct of their lives." ("Travels Round the World," Vol. II, p. 41.) Another French observer Le Couteur wrote:—The Indians are "very effeminate, lazy, and cowardly, but their vices have with no great reason been attributed to the effects of the climate in which they live." (Le Couteur: "Letters from India," p. 336.) The fact remains that the observations and comments of lady residents and of other writers served more to diminish the possibilities of a friendly contact, than to draw nearer the bonds of understanding and tolerance. Instances can also be multiplied to show that the discerning English people were not utterly blind to the finer qualities of Indian character which are often apparent in the observations of English and other continental writers, and that there were other hues beside the darksome dye in which it has been often painted by literary artists of the type of Macaulay and Ruskin during the nineteenth century. About the present performances of journalists and politicians it is better not to comment at all. Thus, such mischievous remarks served to scatter widely the seeds of misunderstanding and distrust which later on produced an abundantly vicious crop.

As has been pointed out in this connection by Mr. Spear, who, commenting on the reaction on the

social outlook by the growth in the number of English women, says :—"The tragedy here again lay not with the abolition of the zenana, a rotten system based neither on justice, nor on mutual self-respect, but in the growth of the herd psychology, and an intenser race consciousness." Generally, individuals by themselves cannot be race-conscious, even if they wanted to; but a group of individuals, as soon as they become conscious of their corporate interests, tend to glorify themselves, if only as an act of protection of their self-respect, against other and larger groups. This mob psychology tends to betray itself in all similar circumstances.

Even with the best of motives and intentions it is not possible for the English people in India to enter into an understanding or an appreciation of the Indian social usages and customs. The Indian caste system, and the nature of the English outlook, have placed apparently insuperable hindrances in the way of a free cultivation of friendship and understanding, except under extraordinary conditions. Burke was quite right when he pointed out this social peculiarity during the Impeachment of Warren Hastings. "This circumstance renders it difficult for us to enter with due sympathy into their concerns, or for them to enter into ours, even when we meet on the same ground." But when there was very little desire, and few opportunities to "meet on the same ground," one can more or less imagine the position. "But there are other circumstances which render our mutual intercourse, our mutual relation, very full of difficulty." The situation is hopelessly complicated by the superimposition of the western caste system on top of the Indian one. When this huge stock of prejudices came to be

fairly evenly distributed through the different classes of English residents, through the different localities during the course of the 19th century, the chances of cultivating a common bond of sympathy almost disappeared completely. "The scrutiny of human nature on a small scale is one of the most dangerous of employments, the study of it on a large scale is one of the safest and truest," said Issac Taylor. But then it is not a very attractive task.

## CHAPTER V

### *Missionary Influence*

If feminine influence was partly responsible for this progressive estrangement, missionary efforts were not calculated to heal the breach. Here again, it is one of the ironies of history, that the Christian religion which teaches the virtues of love and brotherhood and charity, should have been partly responsible for introducing this wedge between the two sections of the population. It must be admitted at the outset, that the aims of the early missionaries were unimpeachable, even though their zeal occasionally appears to have outrun their discretion. Besides, it is also very significant to note, that in their personal dealings with the Indians there was generally an attitude of equality, and no assumption of any superior airs. But their hearty and unbalanced denunciation of the "abominations of heathenism", their unrestrained and bitter attacks on the evils of Islam and Hinduism, and of other Eastern creeds, were so violent and uncompromising, born of imperfect knowledge, as well as of early enthusiasm, that such vehement and exaggerated utterances propagated the general belief that Indian society was rotten beyond redemption, that Indian religions were hopelessly corrupt and degraded, that the people of India were sunk in corruption and moral degradation. Henry Martyn, the most zealous champion of this religious crusade,

lived the most simple of lives. His religious zeal was even annoying to the Victorian English snobs at Calcutta, and he was bitterly attacked for his free mixture with the natives, with the Pandits and Maulvis, as can be seen from the "Journals" of Henry Martyn! His walking about in the evening, instead of driving or riding, was disapproved by the pharisaical Anglo-Indian society at Calcutta. Though his social habits were unpopular and unacceptable, his criticisms of the Hindu religion and customs were eagerly welcomed and applied by people who knew absolutely nothing about these. The sincere and self-denying efforts of the early missionaries to redeem the heathens from their wickedness, had the curious and unexpected effect of unconsciously hardening the hearts of some of their western flock, confirming them in the false belief, till now more or less vague and irrational, that the Indians, submerged in their barbarous beliefs and revolting creeds, were not fit to associate with, "that it was a waste of time to mix with them." It encouraged the flattering, but somewhat erroneous idea, that the great merit of the self-denying missionaries consisted, not in giving their lives to the service of India, but in "descending so far and giving up the privileges of a gentleman." Thus while some of the self-deluded missionaries received an access of religious pride, it had quite an opposite effect on the laymen, who, accepting whole-heartedly the sweeping criticisms of the religious leaders, basked temporarily in the reflected glory of their superior religious and cultural heritage. The attitude of the Rev. David Brown, who, it has been said, "never permitted the heathen to obtrude their abominations



on Europeans, if he could prevent it," was somewhat typical of the attitude of early missionaries.

The author of the "Memoir" of Rev. D. Brown remarks, that "utter disgust, intermingled with the greatest pity, seemed to be the result in Brown's mind, of the knowledge he had acquired, in his investigation of the filthy and sanguinary frivolity of the debased religion, and of its baneful influence on the principles and morals of its votaries." ("Memoir of Rev. D. Brown", p. 55.) A similar opinion was shared and expressed by Carey. "The Hindus were literally sunk in the depths of vice. It is true that they have not the ferocity of American Indians, but this is abundantly supplied by the dreadful stock of low cunning and deceit. Moral rectitude makes no part of their religious system, and therefore no wonder they are sunk, nay wholly immersed, in all manner of impurity." (William Carey : "Serampore Letters," p. 62, 1794.) The author of the "Memoir" of the Rev. H. Pearson, Claudius Buchanan, says, "Their general character is imbecility of body and imbecility of mind." (Volume I, p. 176.)

The opinions and conduct of some of the early missionaries remind one of a rather cynical statement about the conduct of the "Pilgrim Fathers". It has been said about them that on reaching America "they fell on their knees, and then on the natives". Similarly, some of the early English missionaries, after praying to God for safely bringing them to the heathen land, later on preyed upon the little reputation the people of India had! The Apostle St. Paul might say that even though he gave his "body to be burned," if there was no

charity, it did not profit him anything. Though some of the early missionaries gave their bodies to be burned slowly in the scorching Indian climate, they had little racial charity, and how far it profited them would be an invidious question to ask. But racial charity is more difficult to be acquired.

On going to see a temple Henry Martyn says:—"The cymbals sounded and never did sound go through my heart with such horror in my life. . . . . I shivered at being in the neighbourhood of hell. My heart was ready to burst at the dreadful state to which the Devil has brought my poor fellow creatures." ("Journal" I, p. 444, 20th May.) Dr. Buchanan expresses the following sentiments on the matter, in the same tenor: "Hindoos are destitute of those principles of honesty, truth and justice, which respond to the spirit of British administration and have no disposition which is in accordance with the tenor of Christian principles." (Forbes: "Oriental Memoirs", Vol. IV, p. 309.)

It is not in the least surprising that gradually the false impression grew up among the English residents, clerical and secular, that the Indians are an inferior order of beings whom it was necessary to keep at a respectable distance. This religious stream originating from the missionaries was also reinforced by the contributions of laymen. "Gentoos in general are as degenerate, crafty, superstitious and wicked a people as any race in the known world, if not eminently more so, especially the common run of Brahmins," said J. Z. Holwell. (Forbes: "Oriental Memoirs" II, p. 457.) An equally arrogant and unsympathetic view is contained in the words of Robert Orme, the great historian, who was born in

Travancore. "An abhorrence to the shedding of blood, derived from his religion, and seconded by the great temperance of life which is passed by most of them in a very sparing use of animal food, and a total abstinence of intoxicating liquors; the influence of the most regular climates, in which the heat of the sun and the great fertility of the soil lessen most of the wants to which the human species is subject in austerer regions, and supply the rest without the exertion of much labour; these causes with various consequences from them, have altogether contributed to make the Indian the most enervated inhabitant of the globe." (Robert Orme: "History of Military Transactions in Hindostan," pp. 5-6.) "The average Indian, especially the Bengali, is inordinately vain," said recently Captain Ellam in his book "Swaraj". Coming as it does from an Englishman, there is profound irony in it of which the writer is blissfully unconscious.

Such hasty and unfair opinions were expressed in the past not only by the missionaries, but also by the civilians, and by other European visitors to India. Since this essay is not concerned with an assessment of the merits, or the limitations of the work of missionaries in India, but only with the direct and indirect effects of their teachings and of their conduct on the topic under discussion, *viz.*, Indo-British racial relations, there is no need to sit in judgment, even if one were competent to do so, on the conduct, individual and corporate, of the missionaries, who sacrificed their comforts, health, friends, families, and worldly prospects, and came to serve India. It is impossible for Indians to repay the debt of gratitude to some of these noble souls, whose names

are too well known to be mentioned here, which on "Fame's eternal bead-roll are worthy to be filed." The writer of this work had the privilege of studying in two of the missionary colleges in South India, and later on working in two entirely different missionary institutions, one in the north, and one in the south of India, for over a decade, and can bear ungrudging and pleasant testimony to the splendid and unselfish services of a good many among them at present. But the unfortunate fact cannot be overlooked, and historical impartiality demands that the unexpected and regrettable consequences of their services in the past should also be enumerated. Thus, when the cement of religious superiority was added to the other materials, the strength of the structure of racial pre-eminence proved almost irresistible.

It is an interesting historical fact, that during the early period of British connections with India, the English missionaries were not allowed to land in this country. They had to take out licences for proceeding to India, except when they came out in the service of the East India Company, which was not disposed to favour missionary activities. What the Government feared was the growth of a community of religious suspicion, or rather, a community of new religious belief. Political unity there was none in the land, "but if the leading natives should turn Christians, we should lose the country," remarked one official who was very high in service under Lord Minto during the beginning of the nineteenth century. (1807-13.) At present there are no fears on that score.

"But missionary efforts had always been viewed with great mistrust by the Court of Directors and

by their servants in India, on the ground that they might disturb the prejudices of the natives and create disaffection. The mutiny at Vellore was hastily ascribed to an interference with the religious prejudices of the Madras Sepoys, and Sir George Barlow, under the influence of alarm, considered it necessary to peremptorily interdict the labours of the Serampore Missionaries." (Marshman, pp. 287-8.) The contemporary attitude of the administration towards missionaries may be seen from the following interesting incident. During one of his public speeches before the Governor-General (Lord Wellesley), Carey had the courage to admit in public that he was a missionary, when one of the audience remarked:—" I shuddered for him when delivering his public speech he dared to avow himself a missionary." (J. J. Ellis: " William Carey," p. 46.) A few other extracts of the impressions and opinions of the English residents, about the character of Indians in the past would be of interest, as showing the attitude towards them, and as also revealing the way in which the racial wind was blowing.

"Never are they ready to listen to reason, they are very troublesome," — a remark which would be heartily endorsed by most of the English about the political conditions now,— "high and low, without shame, neither having the fear of God." The last accusation is extremely amusing, coming as it does from a European, and it would be interesting to know what Deity it was that most of them feared! Some of them at least among the early merchants had no other creed than that of a "barbarian," which runs as follows:—" I bow to none, except my

stomach, the first of deities." Manucci, whose views have been quoted above, then exhorts his countrymen and other Europeans to be very patient under their trials and tribulations:—"As for Europeans who come to India, they must arm themselves with great patience and prudence, for, not a soul will speak to them, this being the general attitude of India. Although they are deceivers, selfish, contumacious, and unworthy of belief, we are abhorred by the lower classes, who hold us to be impure, being themselves worse than pigs." ("Storia do Mogor," II, p. 452.)

The cupidity of the natives is another feature which the continental traveller, *Sieur Luillier*, mentions, blissfully oblivious of their weakness in the same matter, which is amply proved by their very *presence* in this country. "Indians are a very sober people," says this traveller who came to India in 1702, at least one of the few virtues which the Indians can still claim—"and effeminate, yet strict observers of their religion. They are extremely covetous of money"—this from a European is *extremely* funny—"which is not over-plentiful in India," just sufficient for attracting most of them, and for their consumption—"and so predominate is this avarice, that there is nothing they will not do, nor any torments they will refuse to endure for it." ("A Voyage to the East Indies," p. 285.)

The gradual change which came over the character of the Indians by contact with the English and other nations of Europe, is reflected in one of the "letters" written during the early part of the eighteenth century. "It is too sad a truth that the

Natives who first admired the Europeans for their innocency, should now by their examples have grown so crafty." (Letter of the Court to Madras, 4th Feb. 1708, para 35.) But how the innocency of the European could have engendered the craftiness of the Indians is a psychological puzzle! This opinion is however not shared by Dr. Ives, who remarks that Indians were "very quiet and in-offensive people. They were honest in land, but on the coast their dishonesty was the fault of tricky Europeans." ("A Voyage to India," p. 48, 1754.) Perhaps the Indians might echo the sentiments of Caliban when he says to Prospero:—"You taught me language; and my profit on 't is, I know how to curse...." The honesty the foreign merchants taught, later on induced the Indians to cheat their old masters!

The foreign traveller, Niebuhr, has some interesting accounts of Indian character. He found the Hindus "*doux, vertueux, et laborieux*" — (gentle, virtuous, and industrious) — who "are among men those who least seek to do wrong to their neighbour. They were the most tolerant nation in the world, but no nation was less sociable than these Hindus." (Niebuhr: "Journal of Travels to Arabia and the East," p. 13.) Innes Munro considered "that Indians were extremely lazy. Ease was their chief luxury, they could not understand the European love of exercise." He quotes the maxim, "It is better to walk than to run; to sit than to stand, but lying is best of all." ("Narrative of Mil. Operations," p. 67.) In the same work he speaks of the "pusillanimous disposition of the unfortunate natives." (P. 100.) Hodges, however, comments very favour-

ably on the "simplicity, and courtesy of the Hindus, and on the "grand manners of the Mussulman gentlemen." ("Travels in India," p. 34.) Major Blakiston attributed the "constitutional timidity" of the Hindus — with the exception of the Rajputs — to the warm climate and to the system of government. "Their virtues are sobriety, patience, and fortitude; their vices, sensuality, avarice, cunning, duplicity, and falsehood. There is no part of the world where less atrocious crimes are committed." He however regretted the lack of opportunities for meeting the more refined and educated class of Indians. (Major Blakiston, "Twelve Years Military Adventures in Hindustan," Vol. II, pp. 110-11.) In another part of the same gallant Major's work there is an interesting reference to the character of Mohammedans also. "The Mussalmans have the same vices and virtues as the Hindus — sobriety, sensuality, patience, fortitude, avarice, cunning, duplicity, and falsehood with the addition of pride."

Mrs. Graham wrote: — "These people, if they have the virtues of slaves," — but have "slaves" any virtues? — "patience, meekness, forbearance, and gentleness," these virtues of slaves are however also "*Christian virtues*"! — "they are incapable of truth, they disregard the imputation of lying and perjury, and would consider it folly not to practise them for their own interest," in the same way as Clive did! ("Journal of a Residence in India," p. 72.) "All Asiatics are unscrupulous and unforgiving," wrote Mr. H. G. Keene — and it is comforting to note that it is not merely the Indian that is suffering from these vices, but the whole of the people of Asia; and the charity and forgiveness of the



European Christian nations have been admirably illustrated in the course of history, both in Europe, as during the late war, and in Asia and Africa, during their relations with the other races! "The natives of Hindustan are peculiarly so; but they are unsympathetic and unobservant in a manner that is altogether their own. From the languor induced by climate, and from the selfishness induced by centuries of misgovernment, they have derived a weakness of will, an absence of resolute energy, and an occasional audacity of meanness almost unintelligible in a people so free from the fear of death." (H. G. Keene, "The Fall of the Moghuls," pp. 21-2.) It is interesting to read through the opinion of Clive. "The Moors as well as the Gentoos are indolent, luxurious, ignorant, and cowardly beyond all conception." (Forrest: "Life of Clive," Vol. II, p. 120). He has also some very curious comments on the standard of conduct of the Mohammedans. "These Mussulmans, gratitude they have none, base men of narrow conceptions, and have adopted a system of politics more peculiar to this country than any other, *viz.*, to attempt everything by *treachery* than by force." Coming as it does from one who forged another person's name and refused to admit the impropriety of the conduct till his death, regarding it quite consistent with the conduct of a "gentleman", who received bribes to an incredible extent — of course they were not "bribes" but "presents"! — there is something extremely comic about the standards of honesty and integrity of some of the *superior* Europeans! At the same time it is an eloquent commentary on the sense of fairness and justice of the English when they come to judge of Indian conditions!

Lord Hastings has also some diverting statements on the character of the people of India. "The Hindu appears a being nearly limited to mere animal functions and even in them indifferent," the superior Europeans being very vigorous in this respect! "Their proficiency and skill in the several lines of occupation, to which they are restricted, are little more than the dexterity which any animal with similar confirmation but with no higher intellect than a dog,"—excluding the superior English bull-dog however,— "an elephant or a monkey might be capable of attaining. It is enough to see this in order to have a full conviction that such a people can at no period have been more advanced in civil polity." ("Private Journal of Lord Hastings," Vol. I, p. 30.) It may interest some of the readers to know that Lord Hastings went to India because he had become a bankrupt in England; and he was also accompanied by an official assignee appointed by his numerous creditors to receive his handsome pay, just as Macaulay came to India a few years later, driven by financial worries. It is such people forced by money difficulties to seek refuge in India that have generally and voluntarily repaid the country's hospitality in this generous manner! Some of the readers might wonder why I have cared to rake up a few of these unpleasant details of past history. Unfortunately, they are not matters of past history. For, not a few of the modern English men have their views formed on such erroneous and unfair estimates of Indian character, as can be seen from the *comments* which appeared on Miss Mayo's books in English newspapers, which are too numerous to be mentioned

here. They have faithfully accepted these vilifications of Indian character at their face value and some of these accounts may be seen doing service even now.

Side by side with the above estimates of the character of the people of India, it may be interesting to compare a few statements of Indian observers on European morals and conduct. In Manucci's "*Storia do Mogor*" there are many occasions where he brings in this. He enumerates a very humorous test which a certain Sultan of Golconda tried to find out the character of the different European settlers. "The Sultan sent word for a stag, and it was divided into joints. He ordered the distribution of the pieces, one to each nation. The Englishman without waiting, until they handed it to him, laid hold on the biggest piece and carried it off . . . . The Dutchman held out his hand humbly and accepted the share offered him. From this it was inferred that this nation was one of merchants, who through their humility have become rich. The Portuguese refused his portion, telling his servant he might take it. At this the King said that this nation was overbearing and would rather die of hunger than abandon dignity. The Frenchman, without waiting for orders, laid hold of his sword, struck it in two pieces, and throwing out his chest marched away. Judging from this the King said that this nation was a valorous one, most generous and fond of good living." ("*Storia do Mogor*", Vol. IV, p. 93.) In another part of the book this shrewd traveller says:—The Hindus believed that the Europeans whom they called Farangis "have no polite manners, that they are

ignorant, wanting in ordered life, and very dirty." ("Storia do Mogor," Vol. III, p. 73.) He also mentions in another connection the dislike of the foreigners by the Indians. The Indians at Pondichery "hold the Farangis in most singular aversion, trembling at their approach, more especially the women." ("Storia do Mogor," Vol. III, p. 315.) "The Hindus have considerable contempt" for Europeans — "even greater than of persons of quality in France for night-soil workers and scavengers." (Vol. III, p. 326.) The pride of the Englishman is alluded to by the author of "Seir Mutaqherim," Syed Ghulam Hussain, who speaks of "the aversion which the English openly show for the company of the natives, and such is the disdain that they betray for them, that no love and no coalition. . . . can take root between conquerors and conquered." (P. 161.) Another Mohammedan writer, Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, whose "Travels" was edited by C. Stewart, mentions "all the overbearing insolence which characterises the vulgar part of the English in their conduct." (Vol. I, pp. 51-2.) Another Englishman observes:—"At Debarta, in Bengal, the villagers have kept away from others because they think Englishmen worse than tigers." (M. Williams, "Serampore Letters," 15th Feb. 1794.)

These extracts have been quoted to show that the opinions which the foreigners formed hastily and wrongly from imperfect observation, incorrect data, inadequate experience of the country; influenced mainly by prejudice, by self-interest, national vanity, and profound ignorance, have been often accepted by the subsequent generations of

Englishmen. All such sweeping and indiscriminate generalisations have been partly responsible in the past for poisoning the springs of social intercourse, and it is extremely doubtful if even some of the modern English residents in India have outgrown the cramping influence of these intellectual traditions of the past. We have one of the latest conduct certificates from Captain Ellam in his book "Swaraj," where he says: "Indians are liars, at least Swarajists are". It is somewhat consoling to find that the incurable mendacity of the people of India is counterbalanced and neutralised by the strong and unshaken veracity of retired captains and colonels who *grow in truth* on an Indian pension, who manage to retain unsullied their spotless character even after a trying contact with Indian conditions! Now, if this gallant captain had any sense of decency or gentlemanliness or humour, he would have thought twice before expressing such a gross slander on the people of a country. But his hatred and dislike of the "Swarajists" are such, that he can hardly keep his temper and his pen within their normal limits! Such are some of the examples of "truth" and fairness of English politicians and writers! English politicians are seldom guilty of departing from the truth! In another context this honourable Saxon son of Mars calls Indians "unconscionable liars"! "On the whole one instinct that I hope our race is acquiring is not to believe in lies, however insisently they are told," wrote Sir Oliver Lodge. ("The War and After".) Some of them have developed this virtue to such an extent that they seem to believe only what the true, "the plain, unvarnished tale," which the English papers like

the *Daily Mail* and others tell them daily on the Indian question!

The glowing excellence of English moral superiority which Lord Curzon used to parade in public was rather unceremoniously handled by one of the leading Bengali journals. During one of his convocation addresses delivered at Calcutta, he had occasion to make an invidious distinction between Eastern and Western morality,—although Burke had effectively burst that bubble previously,—pointing out to the unapproachable excellence of the latter. The noble lord had however forgotten a somewhat compromising incident in his pre-viceregal days, when as plain Mr. Curzon, he had undertaken an extensive tour of the Asiatic countries. During his visit to one of the Eastern courts—I believe at Korea—he had to tell a lie—of course a “white lie”—there is also a difference in the quality of the lies uttered by the Asiatics and the Europeans!—This nasty incident was disinterred by the Calcutta daily and quoted along with the comments on the Convocation speech! The Governor-General, however, took this home thrust in good humour, and did not think it necessary or politic to prohibit the publication of the newspaper from the next day forwards! That the general standard of public morality is higher in England than in some of the European countries may be admitted. Of course, the standard of public morality of the people of India does not come into the picture at all for purposes of comparison!

A good many of the opinions pronounced by the early writers, lay and secular, men and women, were based on personal observations; while others gathered

them second hand. Facilities for travel were less, though the chances for observation on a limited field were greater. How far the Collector of Boggley-wallah whom Thackeray describes in "Vanity Fair" is a typical character or not of that period, it is rather hard to say. But the conditions which Thackeray describes were exceedingly common at that time. "He had lived for about eight years of his life alone at this charming place, scarcely seeing a Christian face, except once a year, when the detachment arrived to carry off the revenues which he had collected, to Calcutta." ("Vanity Fair," p. 27.) How many *black faces* he saw during the time, is not mentioned. But the conditions are changed now, and it is easy to stay in India for ten or twenty years seeing many white and brown and black faces, but *talk-ing* only to the white ones! The varieties which Thackeray described have disappeared into the region of Rip Van Winkles, and nowadays one comes across different types. The "Nabobs of books and traditions is a personage no longer to be found among us. He is neither as wealthy nor as wicked as the jaundiced monster of romances and comedies, who purchases the estate of a broken-down English gentleman with rupees tortured out of bleeding Rajahs, who smokes a 'hookah' in public, and in private carries a guilty conscience, diamonds of untold value, and a diseased liver; who has a vulgar wife,"—besides the sable Indian mistresses—"with a retinue of black servants whom she ill-treats, and a son and a daughter with good impulses and imperfect education, desirous to amend their own and their parent's lives, and thoroughly ashamed of the

follies of the old people." (Thackeray: "The Newcomes," p. 108).

One can hardly exaggerate the sinister part played in the past, and even now, by *prejudice*, in the long tissue of absurdities and exaggerations and lies about Indian character which I had occasion to quote before. There are many others which have been omitted for want of space. The veil of prejudice has never been completely lifted since, and it still obscures and distorts the vision of a good many of the English observers and critics. "Minds of moderate calibre ordinarily condemn everything which is beyond their range", observed La Rochefoucauld. "To judge human character rightly, a man may sometimes have very small experience, provided he has a very large heart," observes one writer very aptly. Some of the English writers had very little experience, but they had a capacious racial heart. What Sir Philip Sidney said of charity may be applied to the writings of English observers on Indian conditions. "There is no dearth of charity in the world in giving, but there is comparatively little exercise in *thinking and speaking*."

"Reasoning against prejudice is like fighting against a shadow; it exhausts the reasoner, without visibly affecting the prejudice. Argument cannot do the work of instruction any more than blows can take the part of sunlight," says Mr. Charles Mildmay. It is almost useless to try and convince some of the English that most of the observations on Indian character in the past, and even those appearing at present, have proceeded directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, from the prejudices of some of the early observers. "Prejudice may be



considered as a continual false medium of viewing things, for prejudiced persons not only do not speak well, but also never *think well* of those whom they dislike, while the character and the conduct is considered with an eye to that particular thing which offends them," says Butler. How true of Indian conditions! "There are truths which some men despise because they have not examined, and which they will not examine because they despise. There is one signal instance of record where this prejudice was overcome by a miracle; but the age of miracles is past, while that of prejudice remains," observes Mr. Colton. The same is singularly true of the case of racial prejudice. This is a truth which some of the English residents will not try to examine, because they have been firmly brought upon its belief. Racial prejudice, as well as other prejudices, "like the spider, makes everywhere its home. It has neither taste nor choice of place, and all that is required is room," — and in the conditions of life in the tropics there is plenty of accommodation for this; "if the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same. Prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind," says Thomas Paine. "The confirmed principles of a thoughtful life are as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life," says Bolingbroke. It is the same case with the racial prejudices which all the English people have cultivated in India. "When prejudices are caught up from bad passions, the worst of men feel intervals of remorse to soften and disperse them, but when they arise from a generous and mistaken source, they are hugged close to the bosom, and the kindest and most compassion-

ate natures feel a pleasure in fostering a blind and unjust resentment," observed Lord Erskine. Although the racial prejudice has sprung up from the latter origin, it cannot be said to have arisen from a "generous" source. It is just the opposite. What Burke says of prejudices in general may be applied to racial prejudices also. "Instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them." This is an admirable epitome of the attitude towards the racial prejudices in India. "Men take their principles by inheritance, and defend them as they would their estates, because they are born heirs to them," says Watta. Well, in India some of the English are quite prepared to defend their racial inheritance to the utmost of their capacity. "National antipathy is the basest, because the most illiberal and illiterate of all prejudices," said Jane Porter once. That may be so in the West. In India some of these are professed both by the cultured and the highly-placed and well-educated. "Our estimate of a character always depends much on the manner in which that character *affects our interest and passions*," says Macaulay. This is very well illustrated in the attitude towards Indian character. To admit the equality of the Indian would mean cutting away the ground from under their own imperial feet. Unless the Indians are regarded as *inferior*, one of the most important and decisive arguments in favour of the present state of affairs would vanish. "Prejudice is the twin sister

of illiberality," according to Mr. G. P. Prentice. "It is the child of ignorance," says Hazlitt. "There is nothing stronger than human prejudice," says Wendell Philips, and India has known that very well in the history of racial relations. "Prejudice which sees what it pleases, cannot see what is plain," says Aubrey de Vere. In India it is disposed not to see what is the common and patent defect in the present racial situation. "The eyes of man in the jaundice make yellow observat̄ion on everything; and the soul tinctured with any passion diffuses false colour over the appearance of things," said a famous writer. The racial jaundice has been in no small measure instrumental in spoiling the image of the Indian for a good many of the English people. "Of all God's gifts to the sight of man, colour is the holiest, the most divine, the most solemn. We speak rashly of gay colour, and sad colour, for colour cannot at once be sad and gay. All good colour is in some degree pensive, the loveliest is melancholy, and the purest and most thoughtful minds are those who love colour the most," said Thomas Starr King. Evidently that excludes the dark and brown tints. For even the "purest and most thoughtful" among the English minds have found it difficult to respond to the appeal of the darksome dye. "Contempt is frequently regulated by fashion," observed Mr. Zimmermann. It is quite true of the racial conditions in India. "Contempt is a kind of gangrene, which if it seizes one part of a character," as of a community — "corrupts all by degrees," said Dr. Johnson, a truth illustrated from the history of racial relations. Wordsworth may say that "He

who feels contempt for any living thing hath faculties that he hath never used, and thought with him is in its infancy," but the conditions in India both among the brown Brahmins and among the majority of Englishmen, are somewhat different.

"There is no action in the behaviour of one man toward another of which human nature is more impatient than of contempt, it being the undervaluing of a man upon a belief of his utter uselessness and inability." "Christ saw much in the world to weep over, and much to pray over; but He saw nothing to look upon with contempt," says E. H. Chapin, though a good many of His modern followers have generally the last attitude in an abundant measure. "Contempt of others is the truest symptom of a base and bad heart, — while it suggests itself to the mean and the vile, and tickles their little fancy on every occasion, it never enters into their great and good kind, but on the strongest motives, nor is it a welcome guest, — affording only an uneasy sensation," says Mr. Fielding. "Socrates being kicked by an ass, did not think it worth while to kick the ass, again," said Mr. South. Well that may be so with Socrates. In India, if an Englishman is kicked by an Indian ass — which seldom occurs — it would be interesting to see what happens.

One cannot insist too strongly on the point that it is prejudice, individual and collective, social and national, the absence of any racial charity that have been responsible for preventing the growth of a better state of understanding between the two sections of the population. Thus the prejudiced opinions of the early writers have been faithfully accepted by even modern ones. These have

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not gone out of circulation, and their velocity is considerable. But unless some of these mental coins are replaced by new ones, the old outlook is likely to remain unaltered. There is a law in Economics known as "Gresham's Law" which may be briefly stated as follows:—"Bad money drives out good money." This is a tendency noticeable not only in the economic plane, but also in the intellectual; for one finds that some of the old false coins have driven out the true and sound ones, and there is every danger that some of the English residents may be still making use of the false coins, though if they were using an ordinary metal coin or paper money under such circumstances, they are liable to be punished. "A loving heart carries with it, under every parallel of latitude, the warmth and light of the tropics," says Whittier, but when the people are actually living in the tropics the conditions change, the glare and the heat proving too oppressive!

There is considerable truth in the words of the Indian poet where he says :—"An avaricious man sees only money; a lover sees only the sweet heart; a vindictive person sees only his enemy; but a proud person sees nothing," and one may also add except himself. Through what eyes Macaulay and others saw India would be apparent to the readers later on. According to Sophocles, "If any man think that he alone is wise,—that in speech or in mind he hath no peer, such a soul, when laid open, is ever found empty."

Small souls enquire, "Belongs this man  
To our *race* or sect or clan?  
But larger-hearted men embrace  
As brothers all the human race,"

says the poet. But this embrace is so far confined only to the white faces. For all the other faces in all other races, for the "lesser breeds" without the racial law, it is often, a less hearty and a more offensive form of greeting. What all funny ideas the English people have about the "sub-human" Indians, as the editor of the *New Statesman* once called them, may be gathered from the following experience which an old student of mine had while she was in England. She was staying as a guest in an English family when one of the children asked her, "Do you eat bandicoots?" She was rather taken aback at the question and asked the boy as to who put the idea into his head. He replied that he had got it from school and that in a certain dictionary it was defined as a "rat eaten by the Indians"! Evidently one of the English scholars returning from India must have given to the editor of the dictionary this accurate information!

## CHAPTER VI

### *Influence of the Increase in Numbers: Military Adventurers — Suez Canal — Industrial Revolution*

The increase of the English community in India after the middle of the eighteenth century was very marked. Though the influx was largely military, necessitated by the frequent wars in the country—particularly in the Carnatic and in Bengal—it was gradually accompanied by an appreciable increase in the official and commercial elements. If there is strength in numbers, there are also dangers. The soldiers consisted of "Royal" troops on temporary service in India "with a maximum of national pride, and a minimum of desire to understand the country," as it has been admirably expressed. But whatever may be the degree of national pride which the English soldiers imported with them, it is interesting to observe that, at least at present, they seem to be the class which betrays least the symptoms of this provoking superiority. The increase in the military element was however not without its reaction on the attitude of the civilians also, whose delicate mental barometer was not slow to register all the changes in the social and political and religious landscape. The feeling of security, arising from the constant presence of the army, affected the racial situation in more ways than one. Not only was there the feeling of safety arising from a sheer increase in numbers, more or less physical in its influence, and

the disappearance of that nightmare of insecurity which acted as a strong restraint on the inclination of some to tyrannise, but there sprang up the comfortable feeling that they would be protected from the consequences of their irresponsible and high-handed actions. The presence of the army removed the need for cultivating a friendly understanding with the inhabitants of the land. If the military had not existed in such large numbers and at such convenient stations, it is quite likely that the relations between the two communities would have been more cordial. The English residents would have been compelled to cultivate the friendship and good-will of the people among whom their lot was temporarily cast. If an indignant individual or an Indian crowd wanted to avenge an insult by an Englishman, the military and the police were there to take immediate action and to strike terror into the hearts of the people. The English people in India were insensibly emboldened to advance their claims, and to behave in a rude manner which would have been utterly impossible but for the presence of the army on which they could invariably fall back in the end. So the presence of the standing army was not without its intimate but indirect effects on this racial question, though its contribution was more negative than positive.

This increase in the military element began after the Anglo-French duel at the middle of the 18th century, an event, whose significance in the different spheres of English life in India, has not been sufficiently emphasised. Even before the victory at Plassey and the ascendancy in Bengal, the peaceful



English activities in the South had been rudely shaken by the fierce struggle for political ascendancy into the vortex of which the English had been irresistibly drawn by the character of the contemporary political conditions. The Company's European army may be said to have begun its existence with the training of two battalions of Europeans for active service. The Royal Troops were constantly coming and going during the prolonged Indian wars which commenced during the middle of the 18th century. These Royal Troops consisted mostly of men who took no part in commerce, unlike the Company's forces which tried their hand at this remunerative task wherever there were opportunities, as in Bengal. They possessed a strong professional *esprit de corps*, and were comparatively unfettered by any awe of suspicious superiors at home, as in the case of the East India Company's troops. The steady increase in the number of the military establishments imperceptibly affected the outlook of the other class of English settlers. The military list of the year 1740 gives 168 as the total number of official and non-official population. ("Madras Consultations," 22nd December, 1740, and "Select Madras Records," edited by Dodwell, pp. 42—46.) After 1746, the Company raised both European and Indian troops, and all regiments were soon officered by Europeans. (Wilson: "Madras Army", Vol. I.) The military outlook also infected the lower class of Europeans, whose ranks were constantly swollen by time-expired soldiers who preferred to remain behind to keep "Punch-houses" or to open petty European shops, or to act as coachmen to the richer class of settlers,

rather than return and face the privations which were certainly in store for them at home. It was these elements among the early English people in India, who had no proper culture or upbringing, who had no reputation to lose, who had no social traditions to guide and restrain them, that were often guilty of racial arrogance in its most revolting form.

Along with the increase in the rank and file of the soldiers, there was naturally *an increase among the number of officers*, and this again indirectly affected the outlook of the merchant and official classes. Whenever the officers had long periods of leave, they naturally spent the time in the Presidency towns, and there must have been plenty of opportunities for them to form friendships with the civilians, thereby producing a better understanding, and at the same time a feeling of common interests as against those of the Indians. The delay, the tremendous expense, and the inconveniences attendant upon a long and uncomfortable voyage, compelled all the officers to spend their leave in India only, and thus there were numerous chances for free communion with the mercantile and official classes in the Presidency towns, which while harmless, if not enjoyable in themselves, must have also served to intensify their community of interests, tastes, and outlook, which were not altogether conducive to a better understanding with the Indians.

A study of the Army list for some years during the middle of the eighteenth century reveals certain interesting facts and figures. Wilson in his excellent work, "Madras Army", states, that in the year 1746, in Fort St. David, there were only 200 European troops of every rank, that by 1749 its strength

had almost trebled, the number being 589. (Wilson: "Madras Army", Vol. I, p. 61.) Within the course of the next ten years it had increased to 1758, and with the close of the next decade (1769), it had swollen to 2,590. (Idem, p. 281.) Meanwhile the civilian population did not show any signs of such a remarkably rapid increase. The figures for the Bengal Military establishment given in Broome's "Bengal Army," tell the same story. It was inevitable, that by their professional outlook and employment, they partly helped to deflect the attitude, if not activities, of the English residents from the peaceful and rather monotonous ways of commerce, to the more exciting, ambitious, alluring, and often highly remunerative channels of conquest, particularly in the troubled and unstable conditions of political life then. The remark of Mr. Spear, the author of "The Nabobs," that "*through their influence all the settlers became more race-conscious, more of an aggressive political group,*" is extremely appropriate.

Side by side with this, the native troops — the sepoys — were slowly Europeanised in every respect, in their dress, in discipline, and organisation, and treatment — in everything except the pigment of their skin. The old uniforms were gradually superseded. In 1767, the Indian "tomtoms" and trumpets were discontinued as soon as the men could pick up the English beats; the drum, and fife-bands taking their place. Even the word of command was changed. (Innes Munro: "Narrative of Military Operations," p. 23.) The anglicisation of the army was complete to all outside appearances. The patriotic English military craftsmen shattered

entirely the primitive organisation of the 'native' army to bits entire and remoulded it to their hearts' desire. But the soldiers still retained their old attitude towards trade. This evil practice was so common that it was found necessary to lay down rules that "no one should hire another to do duty for him, or keep a public house, or retail a shop, without leave, in which case he would be discharged on condition of serving in an emergency, and that no presents should be accepted on pain of dismissal." (Wilson, Vol. I, p. 55.) This practice of receiving "presents" is another euphemism for accepting bribes, though there may be slight differences in degree.

But, while the military contributed in some measure in stereotyping the hitherto plastic social mould, it would appear that it was in the army that this feeling of racial pre-eminence was least dominant. "With the best of the native soldiery they became on most friendly terms, having, as good Englishmen, a just appreciation of excellence in others." ("Village, Town and Country Life in India," A. C. Newcombe.) That in the army it exists in a less virulent form is the opinion of such eminent authorities as Sir Francis Younghusband, and Sir Arnold Willson, whose account of the operations in Mesopotamia between 1914—1917 shows, how complete, happy, if not touching, was the nature of the understanding which prevailed between the Indian troops and European officers, who usually evince a greater desire to understand the Indian character than those exclusive official or commercial residents in the large presidency towns, "whose orientation towards political liberalism is powerless to modify their inherited or blindly accept-

ed racial intransigence," as Mr. Byron puts it in his "An Essay on India." In spite of the fact that the relations between the soldiers and the inhabitants of the country continued to be more satisfactory than between other classes of Europeans and the Indians, even here complaints of ill-treatment were not unknown. MacIntosh in his "Travels" refers to the general complaint of the Hindus against the insolence of the soldiers and some of the other civilians.

With the increase in the feminine element, together with the increase in the number of Englishmen, civilians and soldiers, in India, *moral judgments began to be formed*. This process was all the more inevitable, because of the existence of a good many English people who could not lay claim to any culture worth the name, and who easily began to judge others according to their own narrow standards and naturally to condemn them as inferior. "As this reaction is more subtle, it is proportionately more difficult to combat, since the defects which it points out are real, while the virtues which exist are omitted or glossed over. Indeed the more one's view is limited to the values and standards of one's own culture the more convinced will one become of the defects of the other cultures. This attitude was, of course, very rife in the eighteenth century," remarks Mr. Spear.

There was a peculiar circumstance, however, during the latter half of the eighteenth century which softened the edge of racial exclusiveness. This arose from the large number of military adventurers who flourished during the period, which has been rightly called, "The Great Anarchy", by H. G. Keene.

We come across the case of Colonel Robert Sutherland who fought valiantly for Holkar and then settled down near Mathra, where his tomb may still be seen. But the most remarkable, if not romantic, of this strange crew, was George Thomas, the Irish sailor, who deserted the navy in 1782, and going about the country, appeared at Sardhana, and took service under the well-known Begum Sombre, under whom he rose to great prominence, being placed in charge of her forces. In this capacity he took part in the campaigns of 1788, fighting for the deposed Shah Alam against the usurpers, and beating off his enemies. In 1792, he left the Begum's service and entered that of Appa Khandi Rao. Later he returned to his first love, whose interests were endangered by a military revolt engineered by another adventurer by name Aloysius. In 1797, he joined the ranks of Scindhia for a year and then set up business and became, in a very short time, the Raja of Hariana, with his capital at Hansi, where he displayed considerable powers of organisation, though he was ultimately brought to bay by the forces of Scindhia, under General Bourguin. He was allowed to go back to his estate at Sardhana, where his old friend the Begum took charge of his family, which consisted of his wife, a daughter, and three sons.

There were others also who rose to eminence during this disturbed period. There was Colonel James Skinner, who was the illegitimate son of a Rajput lady and an English officer. Starting life as a printer's apprentice at Calcutta, he ultimately won a commission in the army of Scindhia. In 1802, he took service with the British and raised

a body of irregular horse known by its colour as the "Yellow Boy's," which did yeoman service against the Pindarees, and continued throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century to be known as "Skinner's Horse." When peace was concluded, he bought an estate at Bilsapur. Later, he again did some valuable work against the Pindarees in 1815, and in recognition of his meritorious services, which he continued to perform even as late as 1826, he was created Lieutenant-Colonel in the English army. He died in 1847, leaving behind a fairly large family. He built a church at Delhi.

Another prominent example of this free mixture between the two races during this period is that of Captain Hearsay. He founded a family of mixed origin, which has supplied not a few officers of distinction to the Indian army. The most outstanding of these was General Sir John Hearsay, K.C.B., who rendered invaluable service during the days of the Mutiny. His auto-biography is interesting reading, and it gives us a good picture of the stirring days of "John Company."

Colonel Gardener, who distinguished himself for a short period, was the son of a naval officer. Though he came out to India in the Company's service, he resigned it, and joined that of Holkar and fought valiantly for him. Later he fell out with his patron, and made good his escape in 1803. After many stirring adventures he managed to reach Lake, the English Commander-in-Chief, who placed him in charge of some irregular cavalry, in which position he rendered splendid service and attracted the attention of his superiors. He had already married a Mussalman lady, the daughter

of the Nawab of Cambay, and with her settled at Khasganj, not however before he got himself entangled in many dangerous scrapes, from all of which he managed to extricate himself. His grandson, Alan Hyde Gardener, who died in 1899, was the fourth and the last Lord Gardener. According to Mr. Keene, his wife was the grandchild of the last king of Delhi and the last of the line of Timur. The distinguished political officer, Colonel Meadows Taylor, the author of such delightful works as "The Confessions of a Thug," "Seeta," "Tara," etc., married a lady of mixed race. John Milton's grandson went to India and either met with an early death or settled down there — at any rate there is no record of his return — and perhaps his "mute inglorious" descendants may be there still!

There were adventurers of other nationalities also — Germans, Swiss and French, — during this period. At the Court of Begum Sumro there was one Levaffo, "Who not only commanded her troops, but had lately received her hand in marriage," remarks Mr. George Thomas. ("Memoirs of George Thomas", p. 55.) Under Levaffo was a German by name Legios, "so named from Liege, the place of his nativity". Thomas speaks of one Taylor whom the ruler of Gwalior (Appa Rao), had unjustly treated, and who had been confined in the fortress of Gwalior. ("Memoirs of George Thomas," p. 73.)

General Claud Martyn furnishes perhaps the most striking example of an unreserved contact with, and complete assimilation of, eastern habits and customs. Born at Lyons in 1735, he came to Pondicherry in 1752. Most probably after the fall of that town, he entered British service. As was natural under



the conditions, after various vicissitudes of fortune, he was appointed to the command of the arsenal of the Nawab of Oudh. Though he remained in the service of the Nawab, he continued to rise in the English army list to the rank of Major-General on a Captain's pay. But he managed to accumulate a fortune which would have awakened the envy of almost every Englishman who took service under the Company then. His earnings amounted to about 33 lakhs of rupees, most of which he bequeathed for the foundation of the "La Martiniere" schools at Lucknow, Calcutta and Lyons, — the first one being now one of the finest educational institutions of the kind existing in the whole of India. This General kept "four Eurasian concubines and a regular staff of eunuchs and slaves". (Spear: "The Nabobs," p. 85.)

Sir John Shore gives an excellent description of the man, his tastes, and habits of living, in a letter to his wife. "In the evening of Yesterday, I din'd with General Martin, who is a most extraordinary character, and everything about him. The house is built on the bank of the R. Goomty, and boats passed under the room in which he dined. He has underground apartments, even with the edge of the water, the most comfortable in the world in hot weather, and the most elegantly decorated." Then follows a description of his costly decorations and pictures. "It would require a week at least to examine the contents of his house. The old General is a Swiss, and talks English about a degree better than Tiritta, interlarding every sentence with 'What do you call it?'. . . . 'Do you see?'. . . . He is however a man of much penetration and observa-

tion, and his language would be elegant if it corresponded with his ideas. His singularities are amusing, not ridiculous." . . (Life of Lord Teignmouth, Volume I, p. 409, 26th February, 1797.)

Instances can be multiplied to show that at the commencement of the nineteenth century, the racial cactus hedge had not grown sufficiently high or broad to prevent the easy passage and frequent intercourse in the Anglo-Indian social garden. The situation is thus summed up by Mr. Robert Byron in his thoughtful book "An Essay on India," to which reference has been made. "None the less in the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the presence of the English in India was primarily commercial in intent, and the English settlers did not hesitate to express their resentment against the accredited representatives of the Home Government in their midst. Huge fortunes were made by administrators, advocates, and merchants who slaked their thirst," — and in a tropical climate like that of India, this was apparently unquenchable — "in great draughts of claret and lived with Indian mistress." ("An Essay on India.") The English merchants and other classes of residents had no hesitation to marry from among the Indians or "half-castes". "Any Asiatic blood will suit persons of rank," says Mr. Tennant in his "Indian Recreations." (Page 52.) "Portuguese girls, a few Moorish and pariah women, and those who have lost caste fall to European soldiers as temporary wives," says Mr. Innes Munro. ("A Narrative of Operations on the Coromandel Coast.") The lower class of Europeans were not very particular in their choice of "temporary wives" at that time.

But this happy period of free intercourse, when no irritating consciousness of excellence spoiled the harmony of social life, was not destined to last long. Sir John Seeley calls this, and the earlier one, the "Brahminising Period," and it is not merely "brahminising," but also, if I may call it so, "Orientalising." Not only the military adventurers who unreservedly adopted Indian manners and customs and style of living, but even the ordinary English merchants and administrators, imitated with varying degrees of success, Indian habits and practices. In their architecture, in their amusements, in their tastes and in their costumes, one finds the unmistakable impress of Indian and eastern conditions. There was no objection to the imitation and adaptation of Indian usages. If the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme subsequently, it was because of certain circumstances and forces which were slowly making their appearance on the political and social horizon.

While the overwhelming majority of the English people in India were busy shaking the branches of the Pagoda Tree during these days, and rifling the "bowels of Mother Earth for treasures better hid," as Milton says in "Paradise Lost," a few among them like Sir W. Jones tasted from the ancient cultural springs of India — its waters had not become so brackish as during the days of Macaulay! There was a good deal of illegitimate intercourse with the Indian women and the Englishmen of that period, and Thackeray was not guilty of any exaggeration when he spoke of "Brahminical cousins" in his "Newcomes." How English have treated their "Brahminical cousins" is another matter. But the

context may be reproduced here. "You don't know anything against my uncle, do you, Sir Thomas?" asks Barnes Newcomes. "Have I any Brahminical cousins?" ("Newcomes", p. 5.) It is hardly possible to find a more appropriate title for some of these people, and the presence of these "Brahminical cousins" and Platonic nephews bears witness to the social life and conditions during that period. It may interest some of the readers to be told that the great novelist had very good chances for knowing the conditions in India admirably well, better than Sir Walter Scott. Thackeray was born at Calcutta. His grandfather began his career in India in 1766, holding several posts in Bengal under the governorship of Mr. Cartier. By various speculative ventures, particularly as a snarer of live-elephants for the East India Company, Thackeray's grandfather managed to earn a respectable fortune. He had left for India at the early age of 17, as his home life was lived under rather difficult circumstances. Being one of a family of 16 members, and his mother a widow when he was only eleven years old; both son and mother were very thankful to get a place in the Company's service, which was then the outlet for all who could not get any job in their own country. He returned from India by the time he was 26 with a decent fortune. Thackeray's father Richmond Thackeray had entered the Company's service in 1807 and was appointed to Board of Revenue at Calcutta, as its secretary. In 1810 he married Miss Anne Becher, and was soon appointed Collector of Birbhum, in Bengal. He died at Calcutta in 1816 — quite a natural death and not from any bullet shot from Bengal revo-

lutionaries!—leaving only one child, who was destined to become one of the greatest writers of the English novel. Thackeray had another uncle Charles Thackeray, who was a journalist for some time at Calcutta. When he was very young he had to leave India, but throughout his writings one comes across a good many scattered allusions to India.

Thus, even towards the close of the eighteenth century there are few traces of that feeling of supercilious indifference to, that spirit of intolerance of, everything Indian. In the numerous descriptions of W. Hickey there exist no traces of the modern attitude that "racial exclusiveness is justified by a divine pre-eminence in light pigmentation." Even in the brilliant but misleading essays of Macaulay written during the first quarter of the 19th century on "Clive" and "Warren Hastings", there are few symptoms of this social peculiarity; none of that "ascription of evil to Indians because they are Indians," which has been so disgustingly prominent a feature of the English writers, residents, and politicians, since the days of the Mutiny.

"The beliefs and desires which have produced European Imperialism can be analysed into four different kinds, moral, sentimental, military, and economic," remarks Mr. Woolfe in his small book "Economic Imperialism." Similarly those factors which produced *racial imperialism* in India also fall under the same category, and one may consider the *economic* causes that helped the evolution of this spirit.

*The Industrial Revolution*, in its turn, influenced this racial problem, though at first sight it would appear as if the possibilities of connection are

remote. Just as the superior military skill, and the more highly developed administrative system of the Romans, brought about an increase in their arrogance and created a feeling of supreme contempt for the conquered peoples, so also the various inventions and discoveries of the westerners which revolutionised the face of industrial and social life of Europe, particularly of England, the astounding improvements in the means of communication which accompanied, and to a certain extent sprang up from that, — all of which may be conveniently summed up in the comprehensive term "Industrial Revolution"— exerted a profound influence on the national outlook, character, policy, and aims of England. These numerous discoveries and inventions were the unmistakable and triumphant witnesses of the superiority of western brains and western culture. In the first flush of enthusiasm and success, the ominous possibilities of the changes were but little understood, and their seamy side appears to have been hidden from the ardent and admiring gaze of their zealous champions. It was left to the next generation to realise that the triumphs of mind over matter had their serious limitations, that humanity had set up another monstrous idol in the worship of which all the nobler instincts and faculties of the nation were in utter danger of being sacrificed altogether.

But for the time being nothing could shake the belief in the efficacy and value and wonderful success of this new cult, this "strange divinization of the machine". "Economic laws are the strongest of all, since people obey them involuntarily." The supremacy of western progress as demonstrated by

these marvellous achievements, was accepted as unquestionable. Though in the course of this victory over the forces of Nature, human beings were reduced to the position of mere "soulless creatures", and though it affected prejudicially the development of the moral and æsthetic qualities of the English, against which degrading tendency, thinkers and poets and philosophers, like Carlyle and Ruskin, Mathew Arnold and Tennyson, repeatedly raised their eloquent voice of protest, that did not seriously affect the trend of economic and industrial developments.

"The sense of material inferiority thus invoked," as a result of the wonderful progress and success of the "Industrial Revolution," and ruthlessly asserted, "covers the slower percolation of other more reputable western ideas, such as justice, representative institutions, medical hygiene, honesty, and punctuality — in fact, all that the West has hitherto been able theoretically or actually to achieve, in its long struggle towards perfect comfort." (Robert Byron: "Essay on India.") "Before these again the invaded people feel their inferiority, though with less resentment, if perhaps with more shame, since the qualities that arouse the feeling are evidently superior. Likewise, in technical and scientific education, western methods opened up avenues of knowledge and opportunity . . . . In art at least, the East can maintain her equality. But even here with the exception of a rare and highly-cultivated minority, she prefers to succumb to the degraded and futile naturalism introduced by the West" — and partly illustrated in the case of such architectural styles as those at New Delhi. "Only in the sphere of metaphysical speculation will she consent, as she has

always consented, to receive rather than to give." But the ordinary Westerner cares little for metaphysics or philosophy. "The last thing which an Englishman wants to be called is intellectual," remarked recently one of the most outstanding figures in the English literary world.

"The inferiority thus forced upon the Asiatic at every turn of life has its undesirable counterpart in the arrogance of the Western interloper," continues Mr. Byron. "Proportionately as the peaceful Asiatic discards his self-confidence, that of the Westerner increases. *White pigmentation of the skin*, at first only a symbol of material efficiency, *assumes, and is paid, the homage of a divine attribute*. Ultimately, the expansion of western inventions, decencies, and ideals, which is really nothing more than an inevitable part of present evolution, assumes in the eyes of its fortuitous movers the mystic character of a crusade, save that, instead of the Cross, its banner is the pale pink tegument of the dominant race" — and that, instead of an army composed exclusively of men, the forces for this campaign are recruited indiscriminately from both sexes, perhaps those drawn from the "fair" sex exhibiting a more inveterate spirit, and a more intransigent attitude. "This missionary spirit is no mere sophism of unscrupulous imperialists, as some hold, but a real emotion, typical of the nineteenth century, which gave it birth," remarks the same writer. It was rather this spirit which Mathew Arnold denounces in his 'Culture and Anarchy' or a slight variation of it, under the name of 'Philistinism'. "It would have horrified Hastings. It can still horrify persons like him. . . . Thus not only the administrator, the judge, and the



doctor, but even the merchant and the salesman, become inspired with a divine assurance in the righteousness of their activities. To question the divinity of western inventions, decencies, and ideals, is to question the new incarnation. Now, as in the past, to swallow the Gospel whole and without demur, is the first principle of righteousness. *Every white man in Asia is become an apostle, and is prepared to maintain his part in face of all opposition.*" (R. Byron: "An Essay on India.")

How far the following description given by this English writer about the attitude of the ordinary English residents in India is typical or not, I am not in a position to say. "We take no interest in Indian culture or philosophy. Why should we? we are not made that way, and are not here for that purpose. *But if you ask us to be candid, we say downright, that taken as a whole they are an inferior race. Their company gives us no pleasure, nor ours them. We have nothing in common with them*" — except perhaps their coin! "We don't want them near our women" — which seems to be the whole truth of the matter. "And the only way to avoid trouble and friction is to do our job as laid down, and when not doing it to keep ourselves to ourselves." That is a very fine resolution indeed, though about its absolute practicability there might be differences of opinion in these days, when the tide of Indian nationalism is sweeping everything before it; and even, if the English were to find a temporary refuge in their ark of "safeguards," eventually they will find such a position quite difficult and untenable. Besides, there appears to be no obligation on the part of *some* of the English residents to follow this

maxim, to confine themselves to their own activities; for they cannot resist the temptation to make occasional excursions — often mischievous — into Indian politics, and having sped a few Parthian like arrows to retreat into their secure and comfortable racial citadel demanding that there should be no retaliatory measures!

The triumph of machine over the forces of nature, and the increase in physical comfort which resulted from that, the phenomenal increase in the output from factories, which the use of machinery rendered possible for the Europeans, which brought about an improvement in the standard of life,—these were all regarded as remarkable witnesses to the inherent superiority of western civilisation over the stagnant, metaphysically-obsessed Indian culture. Every new invention was hailed as a convincing proof of the inherent superiority of the western mind over the Oriental. One may therefore venture to hazard the opinion, that the *general reaction of the achievements of the Industrial Revolution was, in the beginning, indirectly prejudicial to the problem of racial relations.*

## CHAPTER VII

### *Lord Bentick: Educational Reforms: Macaulay's Influence*

Thus by the time of William Bentick, the two communities had drifted very far apart, though the estrangement had not attracted sufficiently wide or intelligent attention. The attitude of English settlers had become more and more imperialistic and their tone correspondingly intolerant. Their attitude towards the policy of Lord William Bentick discloses the mentality of the English during this period. They did not like first of all the simplicity of his tastes, and his unostentatious ways, which were in glaring and disgusting contrast to the pomp, show, and aloofness, which Wellesley maintained, though for different motives, as can be seen from his "Memoirs" and "Despatches." But "the boast of heraldry and the pomp of power" had become an important and indispensable article in the social creed of the English settlers, and any lapse from this was viewed as a serious social misdemeanour by the prestige-ridden society at Calcutta. The feelings of disgust of the European community at the behaviour of Lord Bentick are admirably revealed in the following anecdote. A pompous old official, — and some of these officials displayed such pomp as would have stirred the jealousy of a Moghul grandee or of a Roman Pro-Consul — who was in the habit of having rich carpets spread upon the ground when-

ever he alighted, so that his sacred skin may not be defiled by contact with the vile eastern clime; and who, though a circuit-judge, moved about attended by all the paraphernalia of official grandeur, — was once asked if he was not related to Lady William. "No," he replied, "unfortunately to the brute himself." The concentrated sarcasm in these words is apparent. Similarly, we find that when another Viceroy wanted to remove some of the flagrant inequalities in the judicial code at a subsequent date, the Calcutta English society boycotted him!

This attitude towards the Governor-General, William Bentick, arose not only from his dislike of ostentation, which appears to be a peculiarly *oriental* weakness, but also from the rigid economies he wanted to introduce in the Company's finances, which were naturally distasteful to its servants. He found the Government heavily in debt, and he resolutely set about the reduction of salaries, perquisites, and sinecures; but his manner of wielding the retrenchment axe was not to the liking of the English officials, and it made little impression upon the "inveterate habits of waste." "He was incessantly abused for his efforts at economy by all the jobbers of the civil and military establishments. They would have had him go on borrowing money or adding to the taxation. He would do neither." ("Empire in Asia," Torrens, p. 299.) In Bentick's opinion, the pay of the Bengal officers was too high. "They shared among themselves no less than 97 lakhs of Rupees or nearly a million sterling. He reduced the total to 91 lakhs, or somewhere about £900,000 a year, to be divided amongst 416 individuals; and this he accomplished "by curtailing

the luxuries of the indolent and cutting down the allowances of the over-paid." After all these distressing reductions, he still left each civilian, from the writer to the member of Council, on an average the amount of £2,200 a year, which is enough to excite the jealousy of a modern civilian! These reforms earned for him the execration of the lazy and the disgruntled in service. "Indolence, speculation, and incompetency of all sorts, waxed wroth at the imposition of a yoke of surveillance to which they had not been accustomed." Though Bentick did not introduce the freedom of the press, he was quite sympathetic towards the matter. He realised the danger which Sir Charles Metcalfe expressed in vivid and noble terms. "If increase of danger be really apprehended from increase of knowledge, it is what we must cheerfully submit to, we must not avert it, *and if we did, we should fail.*"

Bentick was anxious to open up the avenues of employment to the Indians, from which the policy of Lord Cornwallis had rigidly excluded them. The administration of Bentick proved, that "extravagance might be curbed and the expenditure and the income of the government nominally balanced without any worse effect than that of temporary anger among the classes who thrive upon corrupt and lavish outlay. They proved that justice might be done, in many essential particulars, to the Natives, without wrong to the Europeans or hazard to the Empire" — "the far-flung British Empire," as it was called during a recent broadcast address. "They showed that without preaching a crusade, or troubling the waters of intolerance, some of the worst evils of heathenism might be lessened, and the protection of a humane

and Christian-spirited law asserted in the dark places of cruelty. They showed that a man who despised the trappings and gauds of state and disdained to defend his acts by stifling public criticism, could win respect and love as his more showy predecessors". (Torrens: "Empire in Asia".)

Bentick recognised the limitations of the English position and the inherent weakness of their situation as foreigners. Metcalfe, the able Anglo-Indian administrator, who, along with others, partly contributed to the success of Bentick's administration, sums up the case very well. "Were he asked whether the increased happiness of our subjects was proportionate to the heavier expense of our establishment, *he should be obliged to answer according to his belief in the negative*; for we were foreign conquerors, against whom the antipathy of our Native subjects naturally prevailed. We held the country solely by force, and by force alone could we maintain it." (Metcalfe, Vol. III, p. 181.)

"It was an honest grief to him (Bentick) to think, that he was regarded as the greatest Jailor-General in the world". ("Empire in Asia," p. 302.) "The system of Lord Cornwallis had been based upon their (the Indians') virtual exclusion from every object of legitimate ambition and every hope of reward; and the principle of administrative outlawry had been maintained inexorably by those who succeeded him. Lord William was resolved to remove it. Experience had proved its impolicy . . . . In his far-sighted policy he saw clearly that through the path of the gradual enlistment of the intellectual ability and ambition of the Natives in the permanent service of their land, lay our only reasonable or

definite prospect of retaining an ascendancy therein. . . . . He saw, as all the best men about him saw, that the British rule in Asia was a stockade driven by sheer force into the ground, and impregnable so long as the garrison that manned it were numerous enough and loyal; but that it had no root in the conviction of the community."

The verdict of one of those who had the privilege to be intimately associated with him in administrative labours, is very appropriate. "He was nearer to the *beau ideal* of what a Governor-General ought to be, than any man that ever filled the office. There have been several good, and several great men in the same position; but there has been none like him. A paramount sense of duty to the inhabitants of India, and a desire to do them good, inspired all his words and actions." If "peace hath her victories no less than war", then the name of Bentick will be remembered with respect by the people whose hard lot he tried honestly to alleviate.

"But in a country governed arbitrarily like that of Hindustan, where no single tie of common feeling, origin, or creed exists between the disfranchised population and the dominant few, it was the impulse of a truly good and generous mind to open a door of appeal against hardship and oppression direct and immediate to the centre and seat of authority," remarks an Anglo-Indian writer. How Bentick impressed the foreign traveller Jacquemont, it is interesting to note. "The man who does most honour to Europe in Asia, is he who governs it. Lord William Bentick, on the throne of the Great Moghul, thinks and acts like a Pennsylvanian Quaker. You may easily imagine that there are people who

talk of the dissolution of the Empire, when they see the temporary ruler of Asia riding on horse-back" — even though the "Son of God" secured the services of an ass — "plainly dressed, without escort, or on his way to the country with his umbrella under his arm. Like Washington, he mixed in scenes of bloodshed and tumult; and like him he preserved pure and unsullied the flower of humanity which the habits of a military life so often withers. He has issued from the ordeal of diplomacy with the upright mind and the simple and sincere language of a Franklin, convinced that there is no cleverness in appearing worse than one really is." ("The Travels of a French Gentleman in India," Volume I, pp. 87, 88.)

Naturally, historians are divided in their estimates of this sympathetic Governor-General, who did not allow his finer nature to wither in the hot-house atmosphere of Viceregal effulgence of that period. Vincent Smith's guarded statements are interesting and somewhat appropriate. "The almost exclusively peaceful career of Lord William Bentick in India has given occasion for strangely divergent appreciations of the merits and demerits of his work: ranging from the vitriolic denunciations of Thornton, through the guarded commendation of Wilson, and the almost unqualified praise of Marshman, to the exuberant eulogy of Macaulay, his colleague and brother-Whig." (Vincent Smith: "Oxford History," p. 656.) It is amusing to note the verdict of Thornton. "The administration of Lord William Bentick would almost appear a blank, and were all records of it obliterated, posterity would scarcely observe the deficiency, while it is certain that they



will have little reason to regret it." In the opinion of Wilson, "a dispassionate retrospect of the results of his government will assign to Lord William Bentick an honourable place among the statesmen who have been entrusted with the delegated authority over the British Empire in the East." In the gamut of criticism Marshman strikes a more attractive note. "His administration marks the most memorable period of improvement between the days of Lord Cornwallis and Lord Dalhousie, and forms a salient point in the history of Indian reform..... With the intuition of a great mind, he discovered the weak points of our administration, which was becoming effete under the withering influence of routine, and the remedies that he applied went to the root of the disease. He infused new blood into our institutions, and started them upon a new career of vigour and efficiency....." This is high praise indeed.

But the diapason of the chorus of eulogy was reached when Macaulay contributed his unbounded panegyric contained in the following words:—"This statue is erected to William Cavendish Bentick, who during seven years ruled India with eminent prudence, integrity and benevolence; who, placed at the head of a great Empire, never laid aside the simplicity and moderation of a private citizen; who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of British freedom; who never forgot that the end of government is the well-being of the governed; who abolished cruel rites; who effaced humiliating distinctions; who allowed liberty to the expression of public opinion; whose constant duty it was to elevate the moral and intellectual character of the

Government committed to his charge; — this monument was erected by men, who, differing from each other in race, in manners, in language, and in religion, cherish with equal veneration and gratitude, the memory of his wise, upright, and paternal administration." "To Lord William Bentick belongs the great praise," remarked Sir Charles Trevelyan in his evidence before the Select Committee of 1853, "of having placed our dominion in India on its proper foundation in the recognition of the great principle that *India is to be governed for the benefit of the Indians*, and that the advantages which we derive from it should only be such as are incidental to, and inferential from, that course of proceeding." (R. C. Dutt: "England and India.")

A perusal of these startlingly varied estimates is extremely interesting, not only as the unconscious revelations of the points of view of the different writers, interesting as they are, but also as an example of the curious process of refraction that takes place when these prepossessions and opinions, personal and political, are transmitted through their peculiar mental prisms. But Bentick's period is important in this connection more for the *educational reforms* which he introduced, which were destined to exert a profound influence on the course of Indo-British racial relations, than for the simplicity of his tastes, or for the other humanitarian measures like the suppression of 'Sati,' he was instrumental in introducing.

If till now the racial rivulet had been slowly meandering along, gradually receiving reinforcements from different other minor tributaries, during the third decade of the nineteenth century, the whole

current gained in volume and intensity in an unexpected manner by the epoch-making educational reforms introduced by Bentick acting under the influence of the school of Macaulay and its supporters.

Even before the actual fateful decision was made, there were circumstances and forces operating from different directions which rendered some sort of settlement of the educational problem necessary, if not inevitable. By the strenuous efforts of William Carey, who founded the Serampore College; and those of Grant Duff, the western system of education was being gradually introduced. At the same time, there was a small but influential band of Anglo-Indian officials who were extremely sympathetic towards Oriental culture and were trying to encourage it. Warren Hastings had founded the 'Madrasa' College at Calcutta; Jonathan Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, had established a Sanskrit College; and Wilson, Prinsep, William Jones, — the founder of the Royal Asiatic Society, — and Colebrook, had been trying whole-heartedly to popularise the knowledge of the ancient Eastern Classics.

Besides, in Parliament and outside, people like Wilberforce were taking an active interest in the question of Indian education. From the correspondence of Wilberforce with Wellesley it is obvious, that the great philanthropist took a keen and intelligent interest in the affairs of India. In a letter written on April 20th, 1799, from Broomfield, he expressed his pleasure and confidence in the various measures which the Marquess of Wellesley was introducing in the administration of India. "May it please God to crown

with success your counsels and understandings, and render you thus a fresh exhibition and illustration of that phenomenon never known to the world till the period of the British Constitution, of an immense kingdom at a distance of half the globe, governed with a disinterested regard for the happiness of the subjects, and, though in a quarter of the world where slavery seemed to be fixed in unassailable security, yet ruled over with a firmness and moderation and an enlarged and benignant policy which imparts to the bulk of the people more than they ever tasted of the blessings of rational and practical liberty." ( " Wellesley Papers," Volume I, p. 97.) Though primarily interested in his life-mission, namely, the emancipation of slaves, Wilberforce had always taken a keen interest in the affairs of India, partly because he happened to be known intimately to the Marquess of Wellesley. If in England there were sympathetic people like Wilberforce honestly endeavouring to confer the blessings of Western culture and civilisation to the people of Asia, there were also in India public workers and social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who were anxious to impart to India the many advantages of a western civilisation, which was looked upon as the panacea for all the ills of India, social, political, and cultural. If the English exponents of western culture in India were dazzled by the vision of its grand possibilities, some of the Western idealogues were more or less ignorant of the beauties and achievements of Oriental culture in the past. " Underlying all these aims was a deep-rooted conviction of the superiority of Western civilisation and culture to anything produced in the East, and a firm belief that the one

type of civilisation, by its intrinsic superiority, could easily, and without friction, expel the other," remarks Mr. Arthur Mayhew in his excellent work "Education in India." "No Hindu," wrote the illustrious, but ill-informed and dogmatic Lord Macaulay, "who ever received an English education remains sincerely attached to his religion" — a remark which is not altogether untrue, since in most cases he has lost his old native moorings, and is helplessly drifting along the deep and disturbed, but attractive waters of scepticism and semi-ignorance, overwhelmed by the sudden impact of western systems, which his rigid social and domestic environments, induce, if not compel, him to reject as dangerous and troublesome. "It is my firm belief" — and there was no limit to the firmness of this dogmatic Lord's strange and superior beliefs — "that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal 30 years hence. And this will be effected without any effort to proselytise, without the smallest interference with their religious liberty; merely by the natural operation of knowledge and reflection." (Trevelyan's Macaulay, I, p. 455.) "Modern philosophy was to be carted in all its freshest splendour, and Macaulay, for one, felt confident that before its brilliant light all Eastern thought would grow pale and vanish out of existence," says Sir Henry Craik. "All religious difficulties in India could be safely solved by the principles of Whig latitudinarianism." The early pioneers like Macaulay and Duff were going to ensure for India "the vast moral blessings" arising out of a general diffusion of

useful knowledge, "which India may under the guidance of Providence derive from the connexion with England." ("Educational Records: Selections from Bureau of Education, India.") Western learning was merely a stage "inevitable, but transitional, on the road to the City of God," according to the missionary supporters like Duff, of Western education. "On such a road Western literature and science were but sign-posts. Only the infallible chart provided in the Bible could save the travellers from the useless and perhaps dangerous deviations," remarks Mr. Arthur Mayhew very pertinently, commenting on the attitude of the Anglicists.

"The question before us is simply when it is in our power to teach this language," remarked Macaulay, meaning thereby the English language, "we shall teach language in which by universal confession." — by which Macaulay just means his own exalted self which was a grand microcosm of the universe, — "there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared with our own; whether when we can patronize sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in the girls at an English boarding-house; history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns three hundred thousand long," — it is strange why he failed to mention, with mistresses three hundred thousand strong, beating the record of Solomon, — "and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter." The superiority of the English farrier, and of everything English, including the

precocious school girls, is as much a nineteenth century delusion as a twentieth century snare. The laudable object of this Don Quixote of western culture in the 19th century was, "to make the educated Indian more English than the English themselves." The educated Indians should be "English in taste, opinions, morals and intellect"; in all except the pigment of their skin! Whether it is that the educated Indian is too close and faithful a reproduction of the English original, or a ridiculous travesty of it, the modern Englishmen feel far from being flattered at the sight of an educated Indian, of a "Babu" as he is contemptuously called, and some of them can hardly conceal their scorn for the pitiable attempts at imitation.

Sir Henry Craik, whose views have been quoted above, mentions one of the indirect consequences of English education which seems to have escaped the attention of Macaulay, a consequence which some of the English have regretted since in vain. Referring to the common use of the English tongue by the Indians as result of the spread of education, Sir H. Craik says:—"If the tendency spreads, it will *sap more than anything else the security of our hold in India*. It is one of the chief incentives to a certain class of natives to acquire facility in our tongue, that by so doing they can interpose between the higher official class and the mass of the people." Some of the English administrators have shown very little affection to these Indian intermediaries who had dared to come between them and the Indian masses. They have resented the appearance of a rival brown suitor to the affection of the Indian peasants. It is the misunderstanding, or rather lack of understanding,

between these educated classes and their rulers that has added to the bitterness in the political life in India subsequently. "They break with their own traditions; they cease to be true representatives of their own people,"—though how some of the English can arrogate that position of *representatives* to themselves it is difficult to understand,—“and yet they are divided by an impassable barrier from us . . . . . For the most part, the experiment of mental and moral acclimatisation proves a hopeless failure,” admits this observer, commenting on the reaction of Western education on the mind of the Indian. That remark is equally applicable to the English settlers in India. That the gulf dividing the Indian and English communities is apparently unbridgeable, the same writer, who had admirable facilities for knowing the inner side of English life in India, later on admits. Referring to the knowledge of Indian conditions of the Englishmen at Calcutta Sir H. Craik confessed, that they “know less about India than most educated men in London. . . . . Yet on broad questions of social relations and political agitation he often speaks with far *more confidence*.” Coming as it does from Sir H. Craik, the testimony has added weight. This is one of the most surprising, but at the same time unfortunate, aspects of Anglo-Indian social life. There is a fatal facility in living this exclusive, self-centred life, with “the great surrounding mass of natives ministering to them, living on them, leading a separate life,” as Sir Henry Craik described the life of the English community at Calcutta. It is typical however not only of the life of the English residents at Calcutta, but of all the important city



centres in India, and there is a gulf as unbridgeable as that which separated Divus and Lazarus, which divides the life of the Englishmen from the Indians all over the land.

The Resolution, dated March 7th, 1835, stated that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that the funds appropriated to education would be best employed in English education alone." According to Dr. Vincent Smith, the word *alone* went too far. Some of the opinions and sentiments expressed during the course of the discussion are extremely entertaining, though they reflect very little credit on the learning of this blundering champion of western knowledge. Macaulay's omniscient school girl of the west is proverbial. He poured the vials of his ridicule on Eastern education based on Oriental classics. It is not necessary to reproduce here the noble Lord's well-known, but flippant, remarks about the comparative merits of the two systems of learning and culture, English and Indian, Eastern and Western.

About the peculiar qualifications of Macaulay to decide the question, Lord Acton's verdict may be readily endorsed. "He knew nothing respectably of history before the 17th century, nothing of foreign history, of religion, of science and art." Similarly, he knew absolutely nothing of Indian culture, Indian history, of India's religious systems, of Indian art. In the days of Macaulay the mistake was perhaps unavoidable. With an utter ignorance of Indian culture, and a blind belief in the unquestionable superiority of western civilisation,

Macaulay and other ignorant and dogmatic English people of his age, believed that "God and Mammon were ultimately, and in a fully enlightened age, reconcilable. They were certainly out to make the best of both worlds, and material prosperity, though distinguishable from spiritual salvation, was not only consistent with, but also in itself a sign of grace." It was confidently expected that "the intellectual materials of purely secular studies would take the place of religion and spiritual traditions, and kindle a sense of personal duty," even if the government failed to ensure spiritual salvation by dogmatic teaching. While the people of India may be thankful for the fact that it was Macaulay that helped them to make use of the key of the door which opened the glorious treasure-house of Western learning, they cannot but deplore the fact, that it was by thus diverting the Indian cultural currents exclusively to the distant, though grand, western fields, leaving the native fields dry and neglected, that the whole cultural mal-adjustment has followed, with all its tragic consequences. Macaulay was not aware of the existence of the Tree of Knowledge in the Indian garden, not even of such a garden in India. To him there was only one garden in the world, although he constantly moved about in the neighbourhood, if not in the midst of, the Indian one. From the financial point of view India may be somewhat of an El Dorado, but from the cultural point of view, it was a sheer wilderness to be crossed as quickly as possible before returning to his glorious native land.

Thus the system devised by Macaulay and friends was to replace the one which had been "so skilfully

contrived for arresting the progress of the human mind as to exhibit it at the end of 2,000 years fixed at nearly the precise point at which it was established." The people of India, "stimulated by the prospect of honourable employment could not fail to be struck by our moral and intellectual superiority." That they have been stimulated by "prospects of honourable employment" since that time till the present time, is undeniable; and this culture is mainly valued for that purpose, as it is the only passport for employment. But how it has also contributed to impress the people of India with the "moral and intellectual superiority," of the west, is a more debatable point. It would seem however, that some of the "natives" have been so forcibly struck by the blinding rays of western superiority, that their powers of normal vision have been somewhat seriously impaired, and they find only a curious medley of confusing impressions, instead of the attractive picture which Macaulay so triumphantly predicted. Whether it is the fault of the vision, or of the object, it is hard to decide.

That Macaulay was inspired by a noble ideal of duty, his other utterances on this and allied subjects fully reveal. Speaking on the occasion of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1832 he said:—"Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive. Or do we think that we can give them knowledge without awakening ambition and to provide it no legitimate vent?" as some of the politicians in England seem anxious to try. His words contain some shreds of political wisdom which are not without their interest and importance

at the "present" stage. "It would be on the most selfish view of the case far better for us that the people of India were well governed and independent of us, than that they were ruled by their own kings, but wearing our broad-cloth, and working with our cutlery" — the true Manchester spirit comes out here — "than that they were performing their salaams to English collectors, English magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, and too poor to buy, English manufactures. To trade with civilised men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would indeed be a doting wisdom, which in order that India might remain a dependency, would make it a useless and costly dependency, which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might be our slaves." How the Conservatives approve this sentiment one would like to know!

"The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with a thick darkness," remarked Macaulay on this occasion, — and exactly a century after these words were uttered, the cloud appears to be as thick as ever. "It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fate reserved for a state which resembles no other in history . . . . . It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system, that by good Government, we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better Government, that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may in some future stage demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not" — though to some of the Conservative politicians of the present time, such a consummation is likely to materialise only at

the Greek calends — “but never will I attempt to retard it. *Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English History.*” (Macaulay, “Speech on India Bill,” July 10th, 1832.) But to some of the modern politicians it appears to be the saddest day in the annals of the British Empire! What Macaulay expressed in another connection appears to be not without its relevance to modern conditions. “*India has suffered enough already from the distinctions of castes, and the deeply rooted prejudices which that distinction has engendered. God forbid that we should inflict on her the curse of a new caste, that we should send her a new breed of Brahmins authorised to treat all the native population as Pariahs*”! (Macaulay, House of Commons, July 10th, 1833.) To what surprising extent this ominous prophesy has come true, history would furnish an eloquent answer!

Anyhow the decision was taken, however much some among the later generations may regret the step. “Never on earth was a more momentous question discussed,” said Sir John Seeley, referring to this educational minute. The Governor-General himself did not play a very prominent part in these proceedings. He was a man who by his own confession “read little and that with much pain,” remarks his biographer. (Boulger, “Bentick,” p. 54, “Rulers of India.”) So it was decided to open the portals of western learning “to a people for ages civilised and cultivated by all the arts of polished life, while we were yet in the woods,” as Burke puts it. If the step taken was unfortunate according to some, still more regrettable was the indiscriminate choice of textbooks. For this however,

Macaulay, "the master of superlatives," could not be held responsible, and his much-abused memory may be spared from further posthumous obloquy and it may be allowed to rest in peace.

The consequences have been quite startling and unexpected. Not even the most enthusiastic exponents of Anglicisation would have contemplated with satisfaction and equanimity the tremendous nature of the reaction produced by this contact—somewhat forced, artificial, and mischievous,—and would have welcomed the offspring of this intellectual union—this cultural Minotaur;—and if the Anglo-Saxon has disowned his progeny, the Indian has not showed any remarkable affection either. "We have helped India linguistically to find herself. We have not helped its intelligentsia to interpret the west to their brethren," is not an unfair admission by one of the English writers.

But how could they interpret the West to the East, when the majority among them were utterly ignorant of the intellectual treasures of the East? "We have done what we never dreamed of doing, and failed in our original purpose," says Mr. Byron. The enthusiastic Anglo-Indian educational reformers were not merely content with placing the English tongue on a very high pedestal, but they wanted to expel the Oriental classics altogether. "The idea of total substitution, instead of judicious assimilation, was bound to break down," and it is this "root and branch method" that has been mainly responsible for the later unfortunate developments on the intellectual, and indirectly, on the political plane.

Nor were the sentiments expressed during the course of the heated discussions very happy. The

analogy with the conditions in the Roman Empire found in the pages of Trevelyan was erroneous in many respects. "In the same way as Rome absorbed Greek literature, and just as Graeco-Roman literary and cultural influence after triumphing in Gaul and Spain passed northwards with the Normans and Angevians into Britain, so the English language and literature would ultimately triumph in India." But the comparison was not quite appropriate. The deep, fundamental, and all-pervading nature and influence of the Hindu and Islamic cultures were altogether ignored in a false and delusive vein of optimism. With the exception of the Jews, the question of nationality may be said to be happily absent in the Roman Empire.

Nor was the character of Imperial Rome such as to stimulate any feeling of racial consciousness. Besides, Rome did not generally look down on the culture of the conquered nations. The result of the Roman rule was a cosmopolitan rather than a Roman civilisation and culture. But the most fundamental distinction arose from the nature of the resistance which the English had to face in India. Here, there were two entirely distinct, mutually exclusive, and comparatively virile organisations and cultures, whereas in the Roman Empire, there was nothing except the degraded, effete, superstitions and promiscuous beliefs which are so admirably described by Gibbon in his "Decline and Downfall of the Roman Empire."

The results, while unexpected and unfortunate in many respects, have been beneficial in others. The educational experiment has ensured a constant and steady stream of clerks to supply the neces-

sary grist to the apparently insatiable maw of the bureaucratic monster, and it has enabled the English to run the administrative machinery at lesser cost. It has also contributed to the improvement in the material resources of the country. Many social evils have been wiped out, and English language has furnished a frail causeway for friendly approach between the rulers and the ruled.

But this cultural violence produced its inevitable reaction. Though the Oriental languages had to retire discomfited from the field for the time being, the nemesis was unavoidable. The English tongue as a temporary medium of instruction was perhaps reasonable. But English as a permanent substitute for the indigenous classics was doomed to failure. The tragedy arose not so much from the introduction of the English tongue, but from the inability of its misguided champions to distinguish between these two important aspects.

There were other unexpected reactions on the *racial problem* also. The confusion of the temporary use of the English as an educational expedient, came to be strongly mixed up in the Indian mind with the "vilification and expulsion" of Indian culture, and the "continuance, suspension, or modification of this expedient became a racial question." "Thus Indian politicians who were enthusiastic over the beauties of English literature, as to out-Macaulay, Macaulay in its praises, now came to believe that in opposing the attempts of the government to develop and to use the vernacular, they were fighting for western against oriental culture and opposing a reaction." The "Filtration theory" by which education in India was to permeate the



masses from above, whereby drop by drop "from the Himalayas of Indian life, useful information was to trickle downwards, forming in time a broad and stately stream" to irrigate the parched Indian intellectual plains and jungles, was found to be rather exhilarating in metaphorical language, but not so much in actual experience.

Under the new educational system, Bentick and others wanted to train up Indian administrators, "but did not propose that India should eventually determine for herself the character of the administration. The possibility of political independence had been referred to by the far-sighted Munro, and enshrined in a phrase for literary reference perhaps, by Macaulay. It was not an educational factor in the nineteenth century, and a feeble proposal to establish it as such even at the beginning of the twentieth century would have thrown such a "superior person" as Lord Curzon into a fit of political apoplexy, just as it now appears to do in the case of a good many Conservatives.

Mr. Arthur Mayhew's considered verdict on the educational experiment may be readily endorsed in this connection. "The facts that are accepted by all justify the broad conclusion that the seed sown in 1835 has produced a crop in some respects far richer, and in others far poorer, than that expected by the sowers, and that the soil has yielded to their treatment fruits for which they would have been anxious to disown all responsibility." (Mayhew: "Education in India," pp. 22-23.) The opinion that he expresses in another part of that work is also interesting. "On the other side, omitting such controversial points as the economic conditions of the

masses, we must set the admitted facts, that the direct influence of western ideas and methods is felt within a very small, though perhaps important section of a vast population, that it is within this small section that friendship between the Englishman and the Indian is becoming increasingly difficult every year, that western culture far from driving out its eastern rival, has indirectly fostered a belief in that rival's merits, and determination to make good its claims before the world, and that the moral superiority of Europe is very widely questioned, and by many denied, while those who urge a complete separation from its "satanic" influence receive respectful and sympathetic attention." The Wheel of Change has brought its natural reaction, and if there is a wide-spread tendency to question the superiority of western morals and western culture and western civilisation, it is partly the outcome of the experiment that was inaugurated by Bentick. Something of this sentiment is very mildly reflected in the words of Mr. Maitra in his work called "The World's Ideal." "If civilisation is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that England will gain by the import of the cargo." ("The World's Ideal," p. 50.) It is such a view which provides the intellectual support to the "Swadeshi" movement, which is a very marked feature of Indian economic and political life at the present time. The shock produced while pouring the superior, heady, intellectual western wine into the mouldy, tradition-bound, eastern brain-pipes was so overwhelmingly severe and sudden, that it burst the narrow limits and a good deal of the superior liquor was spoiled in the process of transmission.

But the later attitude of triumphant superiority and assurance of the contemporaries of Macaulay and of his co-adjutors declined ere long, and some of the more discerning among the Anglo-Indian statesmen were uneasy at the development of their own handiwork. They suspected that they had called up a Spirit from the Deep which was in no mood to obey their orders, and few of them felt they had the courage to wield the Prosperian magic wand and to tame the turbulent imp created by their labours. Macaulay's enthusiasm did not animate those "responsible for setting the course, or for actually guiding the ship through the shoals and cross-currents of Oriental life." The majority of Englishmen in India would heartily endorse the somewhat uncharitable wish of Sir H. Craik, "It would have been a happy thing for India had Macaulay never lived." Perhaps some among Indians also may be disposed to endorse this wish. Though the party of the Orientalists had been thoroughly discomfited, their fond belief in the "toughness of Oriental culture" still survived, and like the village school master of Goldsmith, "though vanquished, would argue still." Prinsep, the champion of the defeated side, still made a spirited appeal for fair field and no favour." ("Educational Minutes," 20th May, 1835. "Selections from Educational Records," Bureau of Education, India, I, p. 134.)

Prinsep and friends desired that freedom should be given to the inhabitants to choose their own courses of study, and that all should be encouraged equally. After a resolute and fairly successful effort to place the position of the Anglicists on an unassailable basis, after playing an unenviable part

in this "*Kulturkampf*" — the war of culture, as the Germans would say, — the Chairman of the fateful committee left 'the land of exile' in 1837. Lord Auckland, the successor of Bentick, amidst the Afghan war clouds on the north-western frontier, allowed grants for oriental publications, and refused to starve existing oriental institutions. But concentration on Western ideas remained the watchword and was later on confirmed by Sir Charles Wood's famous Despatch of 1854. This Despatch of the Court of Directors has been sometimes called the "Magna-Carta of English education in India." But it has never been whole-heartedly accepted.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Influence of Macaulay—(continued)*

Thus from a brief review of the educational policy of the Government of India it is obvious, that this triumphant feeling of superiority existed in a remarkable degree during the middle of the nineteenth century. Though the dogmatic opinions and statements which Macaulay so flippantly made may not be shared by many at present, the number of those who would agree with the general tenor of his sweeping statements appears to be not inconsiderable. But the educational policy "has followed a zig-zag course, and the wind has never been fully behind us. Our deference to Oriental culture has never cleared us of the charge of trying to westernise the East, nor removed the suspicion of our innate, though at times successfully concealed, conviction of the superiority of the West," admits a western writer. This deference to Oriental culture referred to above may have existed in the 18th century and in the early part of the nineteenth century; but about its existence at present one must entertain some doubts. "The substitution of one culture for another has not been as a watchword educationally effective. That our incurable tendency to swop horses in the middle of the stream has in this instance worked for the ultimate good of India few will deny," says Mr. Mayhew. By the time that the fierce embers of this controversy died out completely, another incident had taken place which

rendered the possibilities of "rapprochement" very precarious. "We are sometimes apt to forget," or rather some of the English do not want to know or to remember, "that while there are some primitive tribes, it is altogether wrong to think of the people as altogether primitive people," warned Lord Ronaldshay. But politically all Indians are primitive, and culturally also they are primitive, according to Macaulay's opinion. Before the Anglo-Saxon Gullivers all the Indians appear like Lilliputians! "Centuries before the birth of Islam itself, India was the home of a more ancient civilisation largely Aryan in origin, which in spite of the many vicissitudes of fortune has winged its way down the long flights of Time, and lives enshrined in the hearts of the Hindu people at the present day," wrote this ex-Governor of Bengal. The same idea about the beauties of Indian learning was once humorously expressed by a famous Bengali orator when he spoke of the glorious ancient culture of India while the ancestors of the English were just "jumping from tree to tree." If this ancient civilisation has been partly submerged under a wave of reaction, it is due as much to the internal decay which set in as to the vandalism of the West. But this ancient culture has not been completely ousted by its western rival, in spite of the many artificial advantages which it possessed, in the unfair cultural competition. The policy of protection given to the English variety at the expense of that of the Indian has been mainly responsible for the gradual decline of indigenous culture. It is the counterpart of the protection given to English industries when they came into conflict with the Indian. But here the motives were not so selfish, though the results were equally deplorable. The ideals and motives

were pure, though they arose from ignorance. But the results have been unfortunate. "Nature denied to the English everything that is beautiful and lovely," said H. Heine in his prejudiced German fashion. But to Macaulay it did deny the capacity for the appreciation and enjoyment of everything that is beautiful in Indian culture.

Macaulay was supremely contemptuous of the attainments of Indian and of Eastern culture, to every type of culture besides the English one. Unfortunately a good many of the modern Englishmen, both among the uneducated, and among those who claim a certain measure of culture and refinement, and who ought to know better, have as much knowledge of Indian arts and learning as their presumptuous intellectual ancestor. The circumstances that brought Macaulay on the Indian scene would serve to explain to a great extent the reasons for his intellectual blindness, for his indifference to, and contempt for, Indian learning. It is also interesting to see that in the case of all those who came to India urged by similar motives, India has not cared to unfold the riches of her intellectual treasures.

Though the greater number among the English visitors preferred to strike monotonously only on the gilded and shining strings on the Indian harp, a few have tried the cultural ones also. Of course, every one got the music he wanted. "The plague of gold strikes far and wide," said Mrs. Browning. In India in the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries it did strike most of the English grievously. It is only to the pure in intellect that the Indian Goddess of Learning cared to reveal herself, just as it is the pure in heart that can see God. That the

Hindu Goddess of Learning — Saraswati — has so far vouchsafed her choice blessings only to those who have sought her with a single eye — and not to the votaries of Mammon, Indian and English, is an interesting fact of history. "Money is life to us wretched mortals," said Hesiodus. To Macaulay it was practically the whole, if not, at least the greater part, of his Indian experience. That one is not unfair towards him in this statement, can be easily proved. The exquisite charm of Indian culture which gripped the capacious imagination of profound scholars like Sir W. Jones and Leyden and others in the past, and of a few broad-minded observers like the late Lord Curzon, and of Lord Ronaldshay at present, failed utterly to appeal to the mercenary motives, to the limited interests, to the Philistine outlook of Macaulay. His one consuming ambition in India was to make as much money as quickly as possible, and to clear out from this wretched country. "Love of riches is the root of all evil." To Macaulay, it was responsible for the fundamental error in his outlook, intellectual and political. About the time that Macaulay left the University, his father Zachary Macaulay, a wealthy merchant and one of the leaders of the anti-slave trade party, lost all his fortune by the failure of his firm. When a post carrying a handsome salary of £10,000 a year was offered him by the East India Company, Macaulay gladly closed in with the offer. It is not altogether unfair to say that throughout the course of his stay in this "land of exile," his main thought centred on the financial aspect of his activities in India. This fact is amply borne out by his letters, which are not reproduced here in detail for lack of space. Taking stock of his financial position in the



same careful and business-like manner as Mr. Samuel Pepys, the famous diaryist of the days of Charles II, Macaulay wrote to his sisters, Fanny and Selina, as follows:— "If I live I shall get rich fast. After next Christmas, I expect to be up on an average about £7,000 a year while in India, — a figure which would excite the envy of every civilian in India at present, who after toiling and boiling in the Indian Inferno, would be quite delighted to get away even with a part of that amount which Macaulay was able to send home within the course of two or three years' stay in India. "At Christmas," wrote Macaulay a year after his arrival, "I shall send home £1,000 or £1,200 for my father and you all. . . . . In less than five years from the time you would read this, we shall be again together in a comfortable though modest home, and perfectly indifferent to the changes of the political world," — and he was not brutal as Philip Francis in his utterances in this respect. It was impossible for a person who was constantly hankering after a "good glass" of English wine, to be attracted by the dirty and insipid Indian Pierian springs! Nor was it easy for a person evidently suffering from the desire for gold, — "auri sarca fames," as the Latin phrase goes, to be interested in the cultural beauties of India. On another occasion he wrote his opinion that "all the fruits of the tropics are not worth a pottle of Covent Garden," nor all the palaces of Chowringhee — the fashionable residential quarters of Calcutta — "equal to a garret in London street"! One can understand a sentiment like this from a schoolboy who has been compelled to spend his time in the boarding-house for the first time leaving his parents. Such was the outlook of the man who was called upon to shape the

intellectual destinies of India! Macaulay, like Chaucer's physician-pilgrim, "loved gold in special." During his impatient pilgrimage through India his main ambition was to save the utmost as quickly as possible, and to clear out of this hell at the earliest opportunity. "I must confess at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very peculiar manner," — whether it was this peculiar manner that was responsible for his intellectual "peculiarity," it would be interesting to know. "I have not enjoyed one happy day since I left my native country." One may compare this with the sentiments of Sir William Jones, who wrote that he was never so happy as he was while in India! "If I should be so far blest as to re-visit my own native country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for, would be presented before me in one view." It was a great pity that this intellectual knight should have been compelled to go to India and to stay there, leaving behind all that he could have always had before his view! "But Knowledge" — Oriental knowledge, to Macaulay and to others who have been similarly placed, — "her ample page, rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll." "Cast not your pearls before swine," said Christ. It was quite unlikely that people like Macaulay could understand or appreciate them. But the fame of India's cultural and intellectual glories and achievements is too securely placed, "far from the carrion kites that scream below," as Shelley says in "Adonais." (Stanza xxviii.) There is a peculiarity in Indian conditions which makes the air of intellectual superiority of the ordinary English people quite ridiculous. In the case of all the other conquests and

conquered peoples, of other black and brown races, they may be said to be *primitive* in their culture. But India had developed a culture which had fascinated the thinkers of the East and West from very early times, while the English and others "were yet in the woods" as Burke humorously expressed it. Rome conquered Greece, but the arts of Greece, her culture and civilisation triumphed over the conquerors, and held them captives. England conquered India, but the indigenous culture suffered violently in the process, being submerged under a wave of reaction. If Indian culture has not appealed to the English, whose is the fault? Is it the inferiority of the culture or the ignorance and indifference of most of the English people?

"Virtus post numos" (virtue after money, *i.e.*, money first), seems to have been Macaulay's motto. The words of Macaulay are not an unfair and inaccurate representation of the attitude of the vast majority of Englishmen in India for very natural reasons. If one were to change the name of the place from Manchester to London or Oxford or any other place in England, then they may be applied to all the Englishmen and women in India. Of course this is a very *natural* and irrepressible feeling among all human beings. "I have no words, he wrote on another occasion, to tell you how I pine for England, or how intensely bitter exile has been to me, though I hope I have borne it well. I feel as if I had no other wish than to see my country again and die." It is not altogether uncharitable to remark that it would have been infinitely better for the noble lord, for India and for England, if he had *never seen India* and died. In fact, this had been expressed explicitly and bluntly by one of the English writers, Sir Henry

Craik. Describing the discomforts of the stay in India, Macaulay wrote on another occasion:—"Let me assure you that banishment is no light matter. No person can judge of it who has not experienced it. A complete revolution in all the habits of life—an estrangement from almost every friend and acquaintance—all this to me at least, is very trying." It is not only to Macaulay that this sad state of affairs is trying. In this respect he may be said to be a good epitome of the experience and opinion of his countrymen in India. "There is no temptation of wealth and of power which could induce me to go through it again." One is not however quite certain of that, for if another financial crisis had happened, Macaulay would have naturally turned his eyes to India to redress the state of affairs, to earn a little more of the "cankered heaps of strange-achieved gold," as Shakespeare says in "Henry IV." "We are annually baked for four months, boiled for four more, and allowed the remaining four to become cool if we can." It would be a very useful discovery—more useful than some of the researches and labours in which literary men are now engaged,—to find out the exact time when Macaulay wrote the incredible intellectual testament for his countrymen, particularly that part of it dealing with the absurd estimate of the respective values of Indian and of English cultures; whether it was when his remarkable intelligence, which had precociously developed under the exhilarating influence of his native bracing climate, attained hopelessly premature senility in the tropics; when his mind was "baked for four months, and boiled for four more;" when the choice contents of his over-stuffed and superior cranium had evaporated rapidly under

the influence of the horrid heat of the tropics! That is likely to be a more charitable interpretation of the unenviable performance of Macaulay. When a person who is accused of murder is being tried, the defending lawyer as a last resort tries to establish his insanity, that the accused was of "unsound mind" during the time he did the act. Similarly, if it could be proved that while Macaulay committed this intellectual butchery, it was during that part of the year when the Indian meteorological department used to register the highest temperature, when his precious cerebrum had dilated to such a dangerous extent as to disturb its equilibrium, that is a more reliable, and a more charitable explanation of this monstrous incident; a more satisfactory interpretation of the unbelievable account of the noble lord's estimate of the merits of Indian culture. According to Pope, the boundary that marks off true genius from madness is very thin and narrow and easily crossed, and perhaps in the peculiar Indian conditions, Macaulay easily crossed and re-crossed the line without being conscious of it. It is necessary to dilate on this point a bit, because Macaulay's traditions have been faithfully kept up by some of the present day Englishmen, and there are not a few who would swear by Macaulay in this matter. The glorious banner of the superior English culture is being unfurled by a good many of the disciples of Macaulay. Captain Ellam, the author of the book "Swaraj" — who besides being an expert authority on military matters, has also pronounced an opinion on Indian culture, — speaks of "our higher Aryan culture." "Vive la bagatelle," goes the French saying. ("Long live folly.") One is inclined to echo the same sentiment in the case of Macaulay's words and opinions.

Macaulay, with all his extraordinary knowledge, never showed any interest in the history, in the architecture, in the natural scenery, or in the past cultural attainments of the people of India, just as the majority of his countrymen did. "He never had a passion for travel, or a minute faculty for the observation of outward things. Slow and lugubrious as were Indian journeys seventy years ago, it excites some surprise that Macaulay never spared a few weeks to visit even the best known and most accessible of Indian cities. He seems to have reserved his interest for the history of the English in India, and even this he was content to study from books alone," says very appropriately, Mr. F. C. Montague, in his "Introduction" to the "Essays" of Macaulay. ("Critical and Historical Essays of Lord Macaulay," Introduction, p. xviii). It is a significant, though not a very favourable, reflection on the superior attainments of Macaulay and on his ability to pass an opinion on the learning of the land, which he nevertheless criticised with such an omniscient air, in such a devastating and indiscriminate fashion; that he was utterly indifferent to, and supremely contemptuous of, its history and culture. At present also there are a good many English people who set up in the critical trade without any capital and initial equipment. "A man must serve his time for any trade; save criticism, critics are ready made," observes Byron. In the criticism of the civilisation and culture of India and of the East, they seem most popular and are considered most successful, who have the least knowledge of it! If the process were to be reversed, and if an Indian were to write on England and America without knowing intimately about them after a few months of hurricane tour through those

countries, then the people of such lands would be amused at the writer's presumption, and his views would be ridiculed. But the falsehoods and solecisms given currency by Macaulay are firmly believed and passed on from generation to generation! No one denies that his "Essays" on "Clive" and on "Warren Hastings" are excellent literary performances. It would be interesting to read through them during one's leisure hours, just as one would read through the "Arabian Nights." The brilliant antitheses, the excellent pen pictures of the conditions of the period, considerably heightened and exaggerated for literary effect and for public appeal, found in his popular essays still grip the imagination of the reading public. But the trouble comes when these are accepted as real history, and when people form their opinions and conclusions on these. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the unfortunate part played by Macaulay in this racial tragedy. "Macaulay was never happy in India," says Mr. Montague — it would have been surprising if he were — and India has been more unhappy at the memory of this arrogant, presumptuous, intellectual Anglo-Saxon Quixote.

It is amusing to read through some of the estimates of Macaulay's intellectual equipment and attainments by his own countrymen. Sir Walter Raleigh, the famous Shakesperian critic and literary scholar, who was for some time professor of English at the Aligarh University, in Northern India, has some blunt remarks about the critical ability and qualifications of Macaulay. Writing to Dr. Nicol Smith, another well-known authority on English literature, on 3rd July, 1905, he says:—"Macaulay — God's Ape — he stinks in my nostrils. Cheap, vain, poor,

noisy, blind." In another context he refers in the same uncomplimentary, but deserving, manner to this writer. "Macaulay stinks in my nostrils. . . . . Pigs like Macaulay have done immense harm." ("Letters of Sir W. Raleigh". Vols. I & II, Methuen & Co.) Macaulay stinks in Indian nostrils also, though some of the English reading public seem to relish positively the smell even now!

Perhaps a suitable explanation for this singular intellectual obliquity of Macaulay's *superior* vision is contained in the following observations of Lord Morley. "He believed as stoutly," — *blindly* would be equally apt — "in the supremacy of Great Britain in the history of the good causes of Europe," and the "good causes" of Asia and India — as M. Thiers believes in the supremacy of France, or Mazzini believed in that of Italy." ("Critical Miscellanies," p. 234.) It is not in the least surprising therefore, that a writer like Macaulay, who unquestioningly accepted, blindly believed, and incessantly and offensively prattled about; not only of the unique place assigned to England in the present Dispensation by a merciful Providence, but also of the immeasurable gulf of superiority that separated the European from the Asiatic, should have indulged promiscuously in such amazing statements marked by unconscious stupidity, unparalleled ignorance, and ludicrous arrogance. Side by side with Macaulay's amusing estimate of the attractions and value of Indian culture, it would be illuminating to place the testimony of a more competent observer, and a more judicious critic like Lord Ronaldshay. In his excellent life of Lord Curzon, Lord Ronaldshay says:—"India and the East was to Curzon the home of re-



condite philosophies and all powerful creeds, of abstruse metaphysics and the mystic cult of the unseen commingled in bewildering juxta-position with strange idolatries and savage superstitions," as an abode of "eternal mystery and of irresistible romance, casting its glamour equally over poets and men of action, but confounding all with its inscrutable secrets and testifying in mournful accent to the limitations of human intellect or the vanity of human ambitions." Asia, he declared, was like "some beautiful spirit whose heavy eye-lids seem to be always half closed," a striking representation of which may be seen in one of the figures of Buddha — "and who nods, with a half smile on her face, in a land of everlasting dreams." (Vol. III.) The vast majority of the *cultured* people of the west see only "the savage superstitions."

The poignant feelings of regret at the separation from home and friends and other familiar interests while in India, this "Land of Regrets," which Sir A. C. Lyall so forcibly reveals, which was the constant theme of Macaulay's lamentation, is also the subject of Leyden's poem "Ode to an Indian Gold Coin."

"Slave of the Mine! thy yellow light  
Gleams baleful as the tomb-fire drear;  
A gentle vision comes by night  
My widow'd heart to cheer:  
Her eyes are dim with many a tear  
That once was guiding stars to mine,  
Her fond heart throbs with many a fear  
I cannot bear to see thee shine."

For thee, for thee, vile yellow slave  
I left a heart that lov'd me true.  
I cross'd the tedious ocean wave  
To roam in climes unkind and new;  
The cold wind of the stranger flew  
Chill on my wither'd wart:—the grave  
Dark and untimely met my view,  
And for thee, vile yellow slave!"

"Ha! coms't thou now so late to mock  
A wanderer's banish'd heart forlorn?  
Now that his frame the lightning shock  
Of sun rays tipt with death has borne?  
From love, from friendship, country, torn."

A very touching and bitter admission of the futility of coming to this "land of exile." India has been in some respects a "La Belle Dame sans Merci" as Keats says in his poem — a lady who has exacted the greatest sacrifice from those who came in quest of her riches. The same sentiments of discontent and remorse are expressed in another poem by John William Kaye written in the year 1834.

"I stood upon the shores of Hindustan  
A solitary man.  
And a voice came pealing across the sea  
Unheard by all but me.  
And the voice said "Up, and be gone, my son,  
This land is not for thee."  
"Why has thou left thine own sweet country's bowers  
And all its world of flowers?  
Why hast thou left a home of quiet bliss  
For such a clime as this?  
Up: and begone, my son, and quit this land  
Thou know'st not what it is."  
"Why should'st thou leave a shore where all is green  
Fresh, lovely, and serene;  
To seek a country far across the sea  
Where winds blow parchingly,  
And grim disease comes stalking o'er the plain  
Ready to light on thee."

But Sir Alfred Lyall has summed up the whole situation most effectively in his poem "The Land of Regrets," a poem with which all Englishmen are evidently familiar.

"What lured him to life in the tropic?  
Did he venture for fame or for pelf,  
Did he seek a career philanthropic  
Or simply to better himself?  
Whate'er the temptation that brought him  
Whether piety, dulness or debts,  
He is thine for a price, thou has bought him  
O land of Regrets!"

Though the Englishman is India's bondsman, strangely enough, he tries to exercise jurisdiction over his swarthy mistress! Like Macaulay and others, Philip Francis also complained bitterly about the conditions of his exile. "The waste of spirits in this cursed country," — and also the consumption of other "spirits"! — "is a disease unconquerable, a misery unutterable. . . I relinquish my family and friends, and I pass my life in one eternal combat with villainy, folly and prostitution of every species." It must be mentioned in this connection that the vices about which he complains are not so much of the conditions which prevailed among the people of India, but among the English society at Calcutta, as is evident from the context. Of the miseries of the Indian social life he was quite ignorant; in them he was uninterested. "If I carry home £25,000 by the severest parsimony of five years," — and there were people in Bengal who were able to carry it without any parsimony — "it would be the most that I can accomplish. I would gladly accept two-thirds of the money if I could be up to the neck in Thames." ("Busteed: Echoes from Old Calcutta," p. 143.) "Whenever I am worth a clear entire sum of forty thousand pounds secure in England, Bengal may take care of itself. No, not for that fortune would I spent two years again." (*Ibid.*) Such were the cultural equipment and the outlook of a good many of the people who came to control India's destiny, political and intellectual. It is only when one remembers this fact that one can understand the real reason for the pitiable judgments passed on Indian culture. But more unfortunate than Macaulay's conduct is the fact that the ripples created by him in the Indian intellectual waters have

not died out. There are many English people in India who still wear the cultural glasses made by Macaulay for use in the tropics! "The East is a University in which the scholar never takes a degree," once remarked an eminent English writer. In India a good many of the English did not care to seek admission into this University at all.

It is a fact which has its own significance that India has been attracted from the very early times mainly by two classes of people. There were merchants like the Phoenicians, the Egyptians and the Romans, and other western *traders* who came in search of her rich articles of commerce. Later on, the Arabs, the Turks and other Mohammedan conquerors, like Mohammed Ghazni and Ghor, Chengiz Khan and Tamerlane, Baber, Nadir Shah and others, were as much attracted by the news of her immense riches, as by the overweening desire to propagate the message of Islam. The Portuguese were animated by a religious-commercial motive; while the Dutch, the French and the English, were mainly influenced by the prospects of increasing their commerce with the countries in the East. At the same time, however, there has been a steady, but thin, stream of foreign visitors who were attracted by the charms of her religion and her *philosophy and learning*. Fa Hien and Huiien Tsang left their native place in search of the intellectual and moral treasures which India held out. Sir William Jones and Leyden among the English during a later age, and the German scholars like Max Müller during the nineteenth century, have been gripped by the attractions of her philosophy. But during the same period, there have come and gone a numerous and obscure crowd who came in search of her material

riches, in search of her gold and other precious stones. Some among them were more fortunate than others, and managed to get a few diamonds, as the ancestor of Pitt did. Most of them however managed to return with a decent fortune, if they did return. Those who were mainly influenced by this "midas-mania," this thirst for lucre, proved blind to the other charms of the land, particularly of its culture. It is they who have been often guilty of despising the land, of crying down its institutions, looking down on its people. It is highly significant of the hypocrisy of western caste system that it acknowledges only one Deity in the world, Mammon. Before this all-powerful God, all *racial distinctions* disappear! "We often hear it said that the English did not go to India for the benefit of the Indians. Of course not! They went to make money. But we have remained inspired by other and higher ideals," says Captain Ellam, as Macaulay and others remained! The simplicity of this gallant Captain is amusing. He wants the Indians to believe that it is for the benefit of Indians that people like him have been remaining in the country, although we have it on the high authority of the Apostle and of others, that from the same fountain fresh water and salt water cannot issue. But from the modern fountain of English character such a miracle is quite possible! Evidently, the love of the previous generations of Englishmen for the wealth of India, has been mystically transformed into the love of the people of India. This love is so great that it generally remains mute! Some of these people in their "exclusive force of a new affection" would not think of talking to an Indian! Yet their love of the people of the land is so deep, so inexpressible! Some of them love the animals, a good

many love its natural scenery and its wealth!

Though people like Macaulay received their sustenance from this country, later on they had nothing but contempt for the conditions of the land. This is a broad lesson writ large on the face of Indian history and people may draw their own conclusions from it. It is not therefore very surprising to find that India has been despised by the very people who were attracted towards it by the fact that they were able to find there a decent means of livelihood which they could not secure so easily in their own country. It is people who have come to India with an eye for the "main chance," people like Macaulay who found themselves financially ruined, that flocked to India, who are guilty of the greatest contempt for the land and its people. What is more natural than that they should be utterly blind and indifferent to the beauties of her literature, to the attractions of her ancient culture, to the finer qualities of her inhabitants? The Hindu Goddess of Learning has generally demanded a high degree of self-sacrifice from her votaries. There has been always some sort of healthy rivalry between Lakshmi, the Indian Goddess of Wealth; and Saraswathi, the Goddess of Learning. Both being extremely jealous deities, the people have found it hard to easily reconcile their claims. Hence it is no matter for surprise, that the Englishmen and other foreigners who came here with their desire for riches should remain utterly unmoved by the attractions of the Goddess of Knowledge. It is to the pure in intellect that the Indian Deity chose to reveal herself, as it is the pure in heart that can see God. If the vast majority of Englishmen and women have failed in the past to find anything to awaken their intellectual curiosity, to compel their respect, the

fault is more of the vision, than that of the object. "India, with all its dire poverty, — and Ceylon to a lesser degree, is far more *wealthy* than America in real values," recently remarked Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, the great social anthropologist. But then what are "real values"? Are they not nowadays measured in terms of the sterling or the dollar or by a "cross-rate" between the two? While most of the English people were very busy excavating the mines, rifling "the bowels of the Mother Earth for treasures better hid," as Milton says, in "Paradise Lost," a few of them also tasted from the ancient Indian cultural springs. The majority of the English players, however, preferred to strike only the monotonous, though gilded, strings on the Indian harp, and it was just a handful who knew how to touch the cultural ones also. The reason is quite obvious. They wanted to scrape together as much as they could during the short time they were compelled to toil here. Naturally, there was little time to devote to other things. Of course, this is quite intelligible, and even excusable. But when some of them like Macaulay presumed to pass an opinion on the level of attainments of Indian culture, then comes the trouble. But the mischief does not end there. This estimate of Macaulay is still accepted as gospel truth by a good proportion of the English people. Even if his ludicrous views are not literally accepted, the same spirit, the same philistine outlook, the same intolerant and contemptuous attitude, governs the conduct of the large number of Englishmen in India. The absence from home, the anxiety to make as much money as possible within the shortest interval, the difficulties of the climate; these and other factors rendered the cultivation of a less prejudiced outlook,

of a more enlightened interest in Indian culture, an utter impossibility. Yet some of them were so versatile as to pronounce sweeping opinions of the laws, the learning, and culture of the land! In any other place some of them would be treated as people fit for mental hospitals! "There is nothing more daring than ignorance," said Menander. The same may be applied to Macaulay's performance.

Wellesley also deplored the absence from home, the separation from his family and other friendly English society. Writing to one of his friends he said:—"The truth is, I cannot support a longer absence from my family and friends. In one of my letters to you I thought I had reconciled myself to my splendid exile; but with the sound of triumph and honour all around me and with the affectation of satisfaction and happiness this proud Governor-General "*Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem!*" . . . . . I have lost many valuable friends. . . . . In this country the cry of death is for ever in one's ears, and it is shocking to stand long, when it proceeds from friends and companions and when no voice of comfort is heard. For God's sake release me and let me embark "emeritus" in January, 1801." ("India Under Wellesley," P. E. Roberts, p. 182.) The fact cannot be too strongly insisted upon, that the fundamental, and almost irreconcilable, difference in the points of view of East and West, arises from the fact that Europe is absorbed in the *material* things. The remarkable *triumphs* of the West have been over the mechanical forces of Nature, over *matter*. The struggles in the East have been directed to another channel, for the conquest of the *mind*. What Christ spoke of the attitude of the two sisters



Martha and Mary, may be aptly applied to the two cases. And Jesus answered and said unto her, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary has chosen the good part, and which shall not be taken away from her." (St. Luke, Chap. 10, verses 41-2.) Thus it has come about that the West has been trying to develop its material resources in a remarkable manner, and its people have come to look upon it as the supreme test of modern civilisation. The larger the number of inventions which improve physical comforts, the superior its culture. India is a hopelessly poor country in the view of these people who calculate national wealth more in terms of pounds and shillings. This is also another reason why the East has been able to preserve her vitality in spite of the many waves of invasion that have rolled over her. None of these cataclysms could shake the real foundations of her life. They just scrape the surface. In the case of any other country even a few of these disasters would be quite enough to overwhelm it. But India has bowed to all these storms, and she still preserves the vitality and the beauties of her culture, which no one can take away from her. The foundations of western culture on the other hand "are built on gunpowder" partly, as it has been correctly put. That is the reason why one finds such conflagrations as the late war. India, according to the great social anthropologist, Dr. Evans-Wentz, is "rich in spiritual values." But that commodity does not find a price in the European stock-exchange market!

If so much attention has been devoted to this question of Macaulay's "Educational Minute," it is only because this leap in the dark had more profound con-

sequences than the leap of the English politicians with their "Reform Bill;" and it was responsible to a very large extent in supplying another impregnable support to the structure of racial superiority. Just as the unsparing, exaggerated, and not infrequently one-sided, denunciations of the early missionaries provided the religious inspiration to the growing cult of racial superiority; so also the sweeping and utterly mistaken and ignorant condemnation of Eastern culture, supplied the intellectual reinforcement. "Au royaume des aveugles les borgnes sont rois" goes the French saying. "In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed are kings." Macaulay is the favourite deity among the intellectual gods of many an English household. The English in India and at home accepted faithfully the ridiculous valuation of Indian culture so cheaply, gratuitously, and attractively provided for them. If Lord Cornwallis furnished the administrative foundations, and Carey and other early missionaries the religious cement, the intellectual scaffolding for the slowly emerging citadel of racial eminence was furnished by Macaulay and his friends. Among the modern illustrious representatives of the English ruling classes can still be found not a few unquestioned admirers and followers of Macaulay's antiquated view of Indian culture. Just as the tree of early Christianity was planted by St. Paul, and watered by Apollos; so also the plant of racial superiority planted by Cornwallis, was watered by the intellectual springs released by Macaulay and his intellectual descendants. In raising this apparently delicious racial fruit in the tropics, Cornwallis marked out the plot, Wellesley put up the fencing, the missionaries did the hoeing, and Macaulay the planting and watering, while the Mutiny gave the

rains, and the fruits have been plucked and tasted by the succeeding generations of English residents here. The majority among them seem to find the taste not unpleasant.

"Unfortunately the new system's adolescence was passed under the shadow of the Mutiny," says Mr. R. Byron. The intellectual movement, somewhat feeble and haphazard, which attempted at reconciling and transfusing the best elements in the two cultures, and achieving a philosophic synthesis, happily inaugurated by Raja 'Ram Mohun Roy, the Philo of India, and which found its highest expression in the Tagores, father and son, and in the moderate school of Bengali intellectuals, who earnestly sought to interpret Indian thought and religious ideas in terms of western reason and sanity, — a process not entirely dissimilar to the efforts of St. Paul and of Philo to "rehabilitate the monotheism of the Jews and the teachings of Christ in the garments of Hellenism," — though starting under very favourable auspices, and quickened by the intellectual co-operation of the best elements in both culture, was rudely and tragically checked by the catastrophe of the Mutiny. In the Indian tropical fields the quills of the racial porcupine gained in sharpness with the Mutiny, and it has been found necessary and convenient to prevent any irritating contact between the English racial rodent and the Indian dog, and to keep a respectable and safe distance in the movements of the two.

## CHAPTER IX

(*The Indian Mutiny: Absence of a Middle Class:  
Pliant disposition of the "natives"*)

Nor is it possible to exaggerate the sinister effects of this appalling *political* tragedy on the history of *racial* relations. The thin, though pellucid, stream of cultural understanding and co-operation which had been meandering along the fields of social life—Indian and English—dried up in the barren and burning sands of racial hatred. It suddenly put back the hand of the clock of constitutional and administrative progress, and arrested completely the course of friendly social intercourse. It may be said without exaggeration, that even after the lapse of three-fourths of a century the conditions have not become normal, or rather, the old atmosphere has not returned. Like the French Revolution in European history, the Mutiny in Indian history has obliterated all the old social landmarks. The curtain dropped on the social drama before the play was over, and ever since this tragic incident, no attempt has been made to revive the old plays and parts. On the tense Indian horizon, only the grim and frightful shadow of the Mutiny remained, darkened by the frenzied falsifications of English writers, and the insatiable outcry for retribution on the part of the British residents in India. "Sweet is revenge—especially to women," says Byron. But all the members of the English community, irrespective of age or sex, clamoured for this "act of passion" as

Dr. Johnson says.

"To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!  
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!  
I dare damnation: To this point I stand, —  
That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
Let come what comes; *only I'll be revenged,*"

says Shakespeare, and the attitude of the English residents could not be described in more suitable terms. With the Mutiny, *colour* — the pigment of the skin — became the most decisive and unalterable line of demarcation between the Englishmen and the Indians. While Tennyson might pay a grudging compliment to the "kindly *dark* faces who fought with us" in his patriotic poem, "The Defence of Lucknow," he waxes sentimentally eloquent over the angelic beauties of the "*wholesome white faces* of Havelock's good fusiliers." Ever since that time, while the "dark faces" evidently lost in kindliness and gained in loathsomeness, the "white faces" have only gained in wholesomeness and "loveliness!" The order is practically the same at present. One by one the wings of this mansion of racial prejudice has been completed and the English have been living in it ever since. But with the increase in political temperature and the rise of imposing Indian mansions in the neighbourhood, which have partly interfered with the free flow of air, the prospects of continued stay seem to be rather gloomy. How, with the "Great Mutiny" the slender chain of understanding snapped, and how ever since there has been no attempt made to solder the ends again, may be seen from the words of Ruskin. Ruskin was an able, impartial, and learned critic of literature and of art. But how even his mind was poisoned and his outlook warped by the incident may be gathered from

the following estimate of Indian character. When cultured men like Ruskin were so hopelessly blinded by prejudice and ignorance, what can one expect from the rank and file of the English public?

"Whilst these conditions of Scottish Highland scenery affected me very painfully," says Mr. Ruskin, "it being the first time in my life that I had been in any country possessing no valuable monuments or examples of art, they also forced me into the consideration of one or two difficult questions respecting the effect of art on the human mind; and they forced these questions on me eminently for this reason, that while I was wandering disconsolately among the moors of the Grampians, where there was no art to be found, news of peculiar interest were everyday arriving from a country where there was a good deal of art, and art of a delicate kind, to be found. Among the models set before you in this institution, and in the others established throughout the kingdom for the teaching of design, there are, I suppose, none in their kind more admirable than the decorated work of India. They are, indeed, in all materials capable of colour, — wool, marble, or metal, — almost inimitable, in their application of divided hue, and fine arrangement of fantastic line. Nor is this power exerted by the people rarely, or without enjoyment; the love of subtle design seems universal in the race, and is developed in every implement that they shape, and every building that they raise; it attaches itself with the same intensity, and with the same success, to the service of superstition, of pleasure, of cruelty; and enriches alike, with one profusion of enchanted iridescence, the dome of the pagoda, the fringe of the girdle, and the edge of the sword."

“So then you have, in these two great populations, Indian and Highland, — in the races of the jungle and of the moor, two national capacities distinctly and accurately opposed. On the one side you have a race rejoicing in art, and eminently and universally endowed with the gift of it; and on the other hand you have a people careless of art, and apparently incapable of it, their utmost efforts hitherto reaching no farther than to the variation of the positions of the bars in square chequers. And we are thus urged naturally to inquire what is the effect on the moral character, in each nation, of this vast difference in their pursuits and apparent capacities, and whether those rude chequers of the tartan, or the exquisitely fancied involutions of the Cashmere, fold habitually over the noblest hearts. We have had our answer. *Since the race of man began its course of sin on this earth, nothing has ever been done by so significative of all bestial, and lower than bestial, degradations as the acts of the Indian race in the year just passed by.* Cruelty as fierce may indeed have been wreaked, and brutality as abominable been practised before, but never under like circumstances; rage of prolonged war, and resentment of prolonged oppression have made men cruel before now; and gradual decline into barbarism, where no examples of decency or civilisation existed around them, have sunk, before now, isolated population to the lowest level of possible humanity. But cruelty stretched to its fiercest against the gentle and unoffending, and corruption festered to its loathsomest in the midst of the witnessing presence of a disciplined civilisation, — these we could not have known to be within the practicable compass of human guilt, *but for the fact of the Indian mutineer.*

And, as thus, on the one hand, you have an extreme orgy of baseness displayed by these lovers of art; on the other—you have had an extreme energy of virtues displayed by the despisers of art. Among all the soldiers to whom you owe your victories in the Crimea, and your avenging in the Indies, to none are you bound by closer bonds of gratitude than to the men who have been now born and bred among these desolate Highland moors. And thus you have the differences in capacity and circumstance between two nations, and the differences in result on the moral habits of two nations, put into the most significant—the most palpable—the most brief opposition. Out of the peat cottage come faith, courage, self-sacrifice, purity, and piety, and whatever else is fruitful in the work of Heaven; out of the ivory palace come treachery, cruelty, cowardice, idolatry, bestiality, — whatever is fruitful in the work of Hell.” (“The Two Paths,” pp. 261-63. *The Works of Ruskin*. Edited by E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, Vol. XVI. George Allen: 37 Volumes, 1905.) I have just reproduced this fairly long quotation to show the hopeless way in which the ugly passions stirred by the Indian Mutiny warped the vision of even the most enlightened and cultured among the people of England. To argue that Scotland and England and other parts of the British Isles were places where innocence and bliss and all other virtues had taken up their permanent abode, and that India has been the prolific nursery of all the vices and cruelties that may be found in earth and in hell, is a process of reasoning that can emanate only from one whose faculties have been greatly disturbed by passion, which is but another form of madness. Thus we find even Ruskin indulging in one of the strangest and most



grotesque pictures that can be produced by an artist — himself the greatest critic of art! "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" asks the Apostle James. (James 3, verse 11). What Shakespeare says of the refining and elevating effects of *music* on the character of a person may be also applied to its twin-sister, *art*.

"The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted. . . ."

says Lorenzo in "The Merchant of Venice" (Act V, Sc. I). But we find from the same Indian spring issuing two different qualities of water. From one splendid Indian artistic cistern flows all the cruelties that earth does not contain and only Hell possesses! Out of the ignorance and lack of artistic sense and drab æsthetic surroundings of Scotland springs all the virtues of Heaven. Behold what a miracle! Ruskin and the English readers are hardly aware of the irony contained in these sophistries! But one can easily understand the reason why such a thinker was swayed by the force of his prejudices.

"Exalted souls  
Have passions in proportion violent  
Restless, and tormenting:"

says a poet. "All passions exaggerate; and they are passions only because they do exaggerate," says Chamfort. Thus we find even Ruskin guilty of the vice of exaggerating things. When people of the type of Ruskin fell victims to this over-mastering passion of hatred and revenge, one can easily understand the atti-

tude of the ordinary Englishman and Scotchman at home and out in India. These writers are hardly aware of the nature of the circumstances that led to the tragedy, of the contemporary feeling of suspicion and distrust among the people of India, that their religion and culture and everything that they held dear were being gradually undermined by the English administration, partly fomented by interested parties. It was in such a vicious atmosphere that the Mutiny broke out. These grotesque and unfair estimates of the character of the people of India, so plainly mentioned by Ruskin, have been blindly and provokingly accepted by his countrymen. The lineal descendants of Ruskin's opinions and thoughts can be found in large numbers among the present day Englishmen. The fairness and charity of the English population in India and in England may be gathered from the *refusal* of Lord Canning, the Viceroy, to publish the summary proceedings of the special tribunals which made short work of Indian rebels and those suspected of being implicated in the conspiracy, in the same way as the "hanging Judge," Judge Jeffreys, did after the revolt in England during the days of James II.

Ever since the Mutiny the attitude of the two sections of the population — Indian and English — has remained practically unchanged. If it has changed at all, it seems for the worse. India has been regarded more and more as the hell where all the black devils dwell, and Ruskin has found many followers and admirers! While the Mutiny increased "the debt by fifty crores" as Marshman says, it is difficult to estimate the *weight of the racial prejudices added to the existing stock!* The measure contributed by this event filled the racial vessels to over-flowing.

How far the lofty sentiments and the unimpeachable principles contained in the "Queen's Proclamation" issued soon after the Mutiny, have animated the policy of the Indian administrations and the subsequent attitude of the English community in India, is a very delicate, and sometimes according to the context and circumstances, even a dangerous question to ask, and certainly a difficult one to answer. "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fill." After reiterating the resolution of the British Government to "administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein," the proclamation contains the memorable words:—"In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward." The noble sentiments found in these words of the "Indian Magna Carta" and the nature of the subsequent conduct by the English people in India, remind one of the following humorous incident where a Scotchman seems to have practised economy in his spiritual things also. This Scotchman—as a good many of the others in similar apocryphal stories—found the task of saying his daily prayers quite irksome. So he wrote down a prayer and had it hung up near his bedstead. On extremely cold nights he used to turn towards that side and was heard to mutter:—"Oh Lord, those are my sentiments." In a similar manner the English have expressed their high ideals of administration on a few occasions as inspiring it in the abstract, but in actual every day conduct it has not been easy to put them into practice. In the racial

relations also evidently, the ideal must have been one of fairness and comparative equality, but how seriously practice has fallen short of intentions, is a matter on which further elaboration is superfluous. In the patriotic poem of Tennyson, "Akbar's Dream," there is an allusion to the splendid achievements of the English in India. Akbar, after dreaming of the "abomination of desolation" that would envelop his splendid empire and of its dissolution after his death, is consoled by another attractive vision.

. . . . . "But while I groan'd  
From out the sunset pour'd an alien race,  
Who fitted stone to stone again, and Truth,  
Peace, Love, and Justice, came and dwelt  
therein."

While the precincts of the Imperial temple were originally inhabited by the attractive and amiable English Doves of Peace and Truth and Love and Justice, later on there crept in, whether with the knowledge and permission or without, of the old residents, the ugly owls of pride, racial arrogance, and exclusiveness; and the screechings of these intruders drowned the gentle notes, the sweet melody, of the former occupants, spoiling utterly the peace, the charm, and beauty of the whole imposing structure. "If the Christian apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, could return to the Vatican, they might possibly inquire the name of the Deity who is worshipped with such mysterious rites in the magnificent temple," says Gibbon. Similarly if Sir William Jones, and Leyden, and Warren Hastings or Bentick or Sir Edwin Arnold were to come back to life, they might possibly inquire what all virtues are still being worshipped in the Anglo-Indian temple of which Tennyson spoke.

Thus, with the Mutiny the glorious racial mansions had been completed. The field had been marked and the ground prepared by Cornwallis. The estimates were contributed by Wellesley. The scaffolding was the work of Macaulay. The missionaries furnished the required masonry. The decorations and embellishments were made by the English ladies. The roofing was completed by the Mutiny. Ever since, the English have been living in these grand mansions, without any polluting contact with the sordid Indian huts. Yet it is very amusing to read some of these people jeering at the Indian *caste* system, terribly unconscious of the fact, that they are guilty of the same crime as the brown Brahmins, and in some respects worse than them! The Brahmins are after all Hindus! The Indian "untouchables" awaken the horror and the pity of the Englishman! From the military side, from the political side, from the social side, from the administrative, from the intellectual and the cultural, from the economic and the religious side, various pipes have been feeding the capacious cistern of racial superiority; and with the hailstorm of the Mutiny it was filled to overflowing. The racial mushrooms grew with greater luxuriance since the middle of the nineteenth century. The flickering lamp of cultural interest and appreciation lit during the days of Sir William Jones was extinguished by the blizzard of the Mutiny.

But to the Indian "Intellectuals," sincere in their admiration of western education and culture, though forced on them originally by State ordinance, the attitude of the English people, nursing bitter and vindictive memories of the recent dreadful event which poisoned the springs of all social intercourse, was unintelligible

and distinctly disappointing. Buoyed up by hopes of achieving and profiting by personal contact with its exponents, the enthusiasts of English culture in India waited patiently to grasp the hand of co-operation. But in this expectation they have been sadly disappointed, though a few English missionaries still continued to plough a lonely and not a very popular furrow. The ugly passions and racial animosities thrown up by the turgid waves of the Mutiny left their indelible traces on the intellectual, social, and moral landscape. Like a thick and heavy black curtain that event divided the two sections of the population. For the ordinary Englishman contact with the inhabitants of the land was taboo. Such a contact, owing to the differences in manners and tastes, and the "well-watered memory of Cawnpore," was only possible on the *common ground of intellectual sympathy*. To the majority of Englishmen in India then, as at present, the cultivation of such a connecting link seemed preposterous, and certainly outside the scope of their appointed task. The only link that would have eventually bridged the deep gulf between the two sections thus snapped under the strain of the Mutiny, and no serious or sustained attempts have been since made to repair and reunite the broken threads. The two social boats have kept their separate course in the Indian waters. The Englishman retired like a crab into his crustacean shell of aloofness. While as a political power the East India Company disappeared with the terrible shock of the Mutiny, its continuity in other matters, like the racial and the economic, has been maintained. "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau," said the old Testament Patriarch while trying to bless his sons.

The racial voice is still the voice of "John Company," but the political hands are those of the English Cabinet. The turgid passions, the burning ugly emotions, that were stirred by the Mutiny did not disappear for a long time. They formed another thick layer, like the lava from a volcano, on the surface of English social life in India. The present day generation of Englishmen can have only a faint idea of the nature of the situation which developed on the heels of the Mutiny. They are only experiencing some of its indirect results. On one occasion when the abuse of, and outcry against, the Viceroy — Lord Canning, who was nicknamed "Clemency Canning" for his moderation — was so bitter and vehement from his own clamorous countrymen, Canning showed the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal some of the secret papers revealing the brutality, and the inhuman severity of the English tribunals which had been set up to try the Indians guilty of complicity in the rebellion. The Lieut.-Governor urged their publication as a reply to the howlings and the furious ravings of the English community. "No," said Canning, locking up the papers in his drawer, "I had rather submit to any obloquy than publish to the world what would so terribly disgrace my countrymen." (R. C. Dutt: "England and India.") Evidently, these papers have never seen the light of day, and never will. It will be interesting to read through some of the records which are not yet available to the Indian research students here from some of the offices in England. The glorious creed of racial superiority was being slowly developed and enlarged by the addition of several new articles of faith from time to time; and with the Mutiny a full consistory approved it and it has become the common article of

social faith at the present time. "Obstinacy is never so stiff, as when it is a wrong belief," says Butler. Very few of the present generation of Englishmen seem disposed to revolt against some of these old doctrines, and to create a schism in their own ranks.

To escape from the necessity of contact which had become so unpleasant and trying after the recent tragic events, the Englishman in India took refuge under the convenient theory of racial superiority, "a theory which was a natural product of his age and which had been intensified by the racial hatred engendered during the suppression of the Mutiny, but which he now consciously and logically expounded as a refuge from his moral responsibility," as it has been admirably put by an English writer. (Mr. Byron.) This aloofness proved also a convenient cloak for his feeling of self-importance and racial vanity. The Indian intellectuals continued to hope fondly till the close of the nineteenth century, when they were bitterly convinced that any "friendly gesture," any amicable approach from the English side, was an utter impossibility. Thus the two parties have drifted their own lone and embittered way. It is the poisonous fruit of the Upas tree of the Mutiny that some of the English people in India are still tasting. Its fruits have been mainly responsible for the intellectual constipation, for the mental astigmatism, and the racial delirium, of some of the people residing in India. "From this refusal of the resident Englishman to co-operate in the process of westernisation begun by their governments, from the successful efforts to disown the responsibility for its parentage and to treat it as a troublesome bastard, may be dated the growth of racial friction in its modern form," says Mr. Byron.



("An Essay on India.") But equally important and unfortunate was its reaction on the "mentality and intelligence of the educated Indian, who, in consequence, remains where he started, imbued with the ideals, and armed with the slogans of nineteenth century liberalism," which the Englishmen of a later day denounced with unfeigned vehemence. Thus the Indians have been left to find their way alone on this intellectual and cultural road. The guides and the tourists fell out on the way. Naturally, the Indian intellectual pilgrims have not been able to enjoy to the fullest degree the pleasures of the English cultural Elysian fields. The early enthusiasm and affection of the pioneers of English education for their intellectual progeny was only equalled, if not surpassed, by the furious determination of later generations to spurn and humiliate the offspring.

This dual policy by which a few early pioneers inaugurate reforming movements, initiate policies, generate forces which their successors counteract, neutralise, and sometimes even thwart completely, is not altogether unknown in the annals of Anglo-Indian administration. Traces of it may be seen in their foreign policy, in the economic policy, and in some of the other spheres also in the past. "The English were primarily responsible for the creation of the Indian Intelligentsia, for creating in the Indian mind to a certain extent, the capacity for the appreciation of the good things in the West" and subsequently they were also responsible for partly closing the avenues by which Indians could secure access to these regions. While they opened the gates of the garden wherein existed the western "Tree of Knowledge," later on they tried to prevent the Indians from tasting of its

*political* fruits, and became less and less enthusiastic even in the matter of allowing them to taste its cultural fruits. The position is summed up by an English writer in the following lines: "The English have created the Indian Intelligentsia, have communicated to it their western ideals, and for nearly a century, have been training it with the avowed object of enabling it ultimately to take charge of, and to maintain in peace and in good government, a united India. At the same time, proportionately as the Indian Intelligentsia has responded to the training, grasped its ideals, and cultivated administrative and political capacity, so have English sympathies receded behind a self-centred policy of self-differentiation." (Byron: "An Essay on India.") This is one of the best interpretations of the new situation and outlook which developed during the latter part of the nineteenth century which has been continued right till the present time. "Thus has arisen in big towns a condition under which the Englishman who consorts with Indians," and who would try to understand Indian opinion and sentiments, — a person like Mr. C. F. Andrews — "is regarded by his countrymen as abnormal, at worst as an outcaste and a traitor." As its interesting counterpart, the majority of the people in India look upon "*some*" of the Indian politicians, whose object seems to be to bask in bureaucratic smiles, and to receive a few alphabets before or after their names, who scan the "New Year Honours List," and the "Birthday Honours List," with an attention which they seldom pay to the newspaper ordinarily, as people whose principle and policy required close watching. Though they may be "*verray parfit gentil*" knights as Chaucer would put it, still some of their opinions and principles

and behaviour have a certain measure of elasticity and adaptability that is remarkable under the circumstances.

In recent years *the political outlook* and developments in India have indirectly conspired to complicate, if not to embitter, the *racial* situation. The political and the racial aspects have come to be grievously mixed up. The belief in racial superiority has generally tended to confirm the impression of the inferiority of the people of India and the grand superiority of the western nations and of their institutions. To concede racial equality might have other trouble — some *political* consequences. So even if the English people — the more fair-minded among them — are persuaded about the wickedness of the existing conditions, they dare not protest against it, or try to rectify it, because of the vague fear, that such a procedure may have unexpected consequences on the political situation. Thus the racial situation is left to drift in the old vicious groove. But there is a tide not only in the affairs of men, but of communities which taken at the flood might lead on to a better and satisfactory state of affairs. But if omitted, it is likely to land them in racial shallows and political miseries.

One can hardly exaggerate the sinister motives and influences now working in the direction of denying and depressing the claims of the people of India to racial equality. The whole question has put on a political complexion. To concede *racial equality* and to behave in a more decent and humane manner, may have very unexpected and troublesome repercussions on the *political problem*. Thus we find some of the most organised, most unscrupulous, most mischievous campaigns now carried on by very eminent and

"fair-minded" people in the West, to discredit the cause of India in the outside world, to discredit India's fitness for self-government. It is unnecessary to single out the names of those who are responsible for such sinister and malicious campaigns carried on by "human" beings — in the catalogue of men and women they pass for such! But the present racial situation is infinitely complicated by the venom spit out by these extremely just and philanthropic Christians! The *present* racial bitterness arises mainly from the activities of interested propagandists.

*Opening of the Suez Canal.*—One of the most remarkable incidents which violently agitated the surface of Anglo-Indian social life during the later half of the nineteenth century was the *appearance of English ladies* in larger numbers on the scene. This was facilitated by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1868. It is very interesting to note that this beneficial engineering feat should have exerted a very revolutionary influence on the history of the racial relations between the two countries, although its importance from this aspect has not been emphasised or appreciated at all by writers in England or in India. Its effects were many-sided and far-reaching. For one thing, by reducing the time, trouble, and expense of the voyage, to and fro; it helped the appearance of a larger number of Englishmen and women in India. This increase in numbers, particularly of *women*, served to intensify the feeling of class and racial consciousness, and to encourage an attitude of aloofness. It served to improve the conditions of social life of Englishmen in India by placing within their reach various social amenities which they were lacking till then. Side by side, there also grew up the habit

of disliking, of condemning, everything in India which did not fall within the slender frame-work of their preconceived social economy.

There were also other profound consequences following this momentous improvement in the means of communication. Till the opening of the Suez Canal, it was not easy for the English residents in India to return to their native place after the brief interval of a few years of stay in this country. The expenses of the journey were prohibitive. The author of "East India Vade Mecum" gives some very interesting figures and ideas about the expenses incurred during the course of a voyage in the earlier half of the nineteenth century. As a result, the English were compelled to make their stay in India as comfortable as possible. There was every inducement to make their continued residence in the country as happy as the circumstances would permit, by overcoming some of the difficulties and drawbacks which are so humorously described in the "light literature" of the period. But from the time of the opening of the Suez Canal, the outlook and interests of the English in India became more "Trans-Indian." Just as the Jews wept over their exile at the waters of Babylon, so the English in India regretted miserably — particularly the women — their unhappy lot in this "Land of Regrets," at the gentle waters of the "Cooum," in Madras, "that withered beldame brooding over ancient fame," as Kipling puts it — or at the surf at Bombay, or on the banks of the Ganges. If the "chirpings of a London sparrow," or the warbles of a Parisian peacock are listened to with rapt attention and absorbing interest by the curious English feminine social circles here, and are reproduced with extreme fidelity at pre-

sent, as a result of the marvellous facilities provided by the invention of the wireless, it is not an exaggeration to say that the opening of the Suez Canal, which annihilated distance and saved time in an unprecedented manner, contributed in no small measure to deflect the social interests of the English settlers in India from Indian conditions to the fashionable fountains of English and European social life.

*Absence of a strong middle class.*—There was another peculiar feature in the Anglo-Indian social life which serves to explain partly the lack of a counterforce to restrain the eccentricities of its orbit. It is an interesting social fact, that wherever there is no strong middle-class — the backbone of the country — the other sections, particularly the upper classes, tend to manifest certain social and class peculiarities. That was the misfortune of France which partly contributed to the outbreak of the French Revolution. In England, the common interests of the Burghesses and the Knights of the Shire, served as a powerful check on the pretensions and tyranny of the nobles. In India, a European middle class, strong and stable, able to influence the policy of the government, was conspicuously lacking. The commercial community — if such an independent and a virile one existed in India then — would have supplied the necessary ballast to the Anglo-Indian racial bark, and prevented it from being stranded on the shoals of racial antagonism. There would have arisen more opportunities for social contact, greater inducements for free social intercourse. In India there were only the governing class and the soldiers, — the former keeping aloof on principle, from considerations of prestige; the latter maintaining a safe distance for other reasons. If there had

developed a sturdy *middle class* among the English community in India, it is not unlikely that the history of racial relations would have adopted an entirely different and healthy course. The social chasm could have been easily bridged over by the existence of this invaluable connecting link. As a result of this grave defect in the Anglo-Indian social organism, it developed certain defects, which ultimately brought on an attack of racial elephantiasis.

*Ruling class philosophy.*—There is yet another factor which has contributed not a little to the propagation of this idea of racial superiority. Every ruling class must have some sort of special claim to superiority that would raise it to a higher eminence from which it could complacently look down on the “fond multitude,” on the “vulgar crowd.” Among the Romans it was force. Aristocracies have based their titles to distinction on different claims. The Greek aristocracy rested its claim to pre-eminence over the neighbouring “barbarians” and the “helots” and others, on birth, intellectual attainments, or physical excellence. With the Romans it was military skill and prowess. In England, the titles to distinction appear to be birth, wealth, and public service. In India, the Brahmins asserted their superiority by their learning and by the existence of the *caste* system. The English have based their claim to distinction in India on their military superiority, administrative efficiency, and on other things, including a *cutaneous* prerogative. Anyway, there must always be some fundamental cleavage, some marked elements of differentiation, between the conquerors and the conquered.

*Lack of imaginative sympathy.*—In a good many cases the growth of the feeling of superiority on the

part of the English, and consequently a complacently contemptuous attitude towards the Indian, has resulted from an utter lack of imaginative sympathy, a complete failure to understand the Indian point of view, an inability to appreciate the good points of the other side, rather than from any deliberate attitude of contempt, except in the case of a few uncultured and rude persons. In the past, as at present, a really intimate knowledge of Indian conditions and of Indian character, has not generally contributed to the development of an aggressive feeling of superiority, as can be seen, not only from the life of Sir William Jones, but of the other eminent Anglo-Indian administrators like Sir Thomas Munro, whose words ought to carry some weight with the modern Englishmen. "Perhaps there never lived a European more intimately acquainted than Sir Thomas Munro, with the characters, habits, manners, and institutions of the natives of India; because there never lived an European who at once possessed better opportunities of acquiring such knowledge and made more ample use of them. Profoundly versed in the Hindostanee and other vernacular languages, and thrown continually into situations where the vernacular languages were alone spoken, he saw a great deal both of Hindus and Mohammedans in what may be termed the *natural* state, as Miss Mayo also did!—and hence the conclusions at which he arrived touching their dispositions and customs were at once more philosophical and more likely to be correct, than those who have conversed only with the corrupt and degraded race that frequent our Courts of Law, or surround our Presidencies." ("Introduction: Life of Sir T. Munro," Gleig. Vol. I, p. viii.) The conclusions of Sir T. Munro may be more "philosophical and more



likely to be *correct*," but they are not very *popular* or palatable as those which are arrived by people who undertake a hurricane tour through the land and then publish their impressions! They are not likely to be as arresting as the scum and the offal and other refuse matter which exude such mephitic exhalations from the writings of people like Miss Mayo! They are not likely to be so interesting as the mendacious exaggerations of intellectual mendicants like Macaulay! But there are fundamental consequences arising from such a choice of their authorities by the English people. Are the English people who pay a fleeting visit to the country during the "cold" weather, and collect statistics and other pieces of information provided by obliging hosts, and who later on publish these in the form of books for the edification of those who stay at home as well as for other people in the world, are these more competent than those who stayed in the country for two and three decades and noted the conditions of the people? Whose opinions should be accepted as more authoritative, more authentic? The answer is plain to the Indian, and there is no need to strain the point. Granting that there was no feeling of superiority on the part of the foreigners—a feeling comparatively absent from people like Sir Thomas Munro, a feeling which perverts their whole outlook, vitiates their whole range of conclusions; do they have the experience, the training, the intimate knowledge, the sympathetic insight into the working of the Indian mind, as Sir Thomas Munro had? The demands of time of even a sympathetic bureaucrat at present are so varied and pressing, that all the good intentions in the world would hardly help him to study the Indian conditions properly. During the days of Munro it was quite possi-

ble for those whose nature had not been warped by prejudice, and whose outlook was not soured by pride, to enter into the Indian environment with greater ease than at present. The conditions of life then were less sophisticated. The means of communication were primitive and slow. The comforts of modern life were unknown. It was impossible to fall back on English society at all times. There was no *political motive* or economic interest to influence the judgment of the individuals. Thus those who had the ability and the attainments and the sincere desire to study the Indian mind, had more favourable opportunities than those at present, though at first sight such a proposition might sound absurd and unconvincing. They followed their unostentatious way along the noiseless even tenor of Indian rural life. It is necessary to elaborate this point, because there is a general tendency to disparage the views of those who pronounced an opinion in the past. Some readers may ask, what about Macaulay's opinions? But it is easy to refute Macaulay's authority from the words of his own pen. According to his own admission he never did any travel in India except when he left Madras for Calcutta after landing and when he embarked for England finally! But people like Sir Thomas Munro, and Sir John Malcolm, and Elphinstone, were thrown directly and intimately for a very long time, sometimes for over two decades, and they were thus in a good position to gather the materials on which they based their judgment. Even to-day there are many people who spent the same period in India. But the conditions of modern life are so entirely different; and the *political situation* has added to the complications of the present position. Thus it may be stated without fear of

contradiction that the views of people like Sir Thomas Munro, whom even Dr. Vincent Smith has ranked as the great of the Anglo-Indian administrators, are entitled to the greatest attention and respect of the present generation of Englishmen here and in England. There is another fundamental consideration which adds great weight to the testimony of those early observers. At that time *Indian nationalism was non-existent*. There was no spirit of national consciousness which has increased the difficulty of arriving at a more correct estimate of Indian conditions now. Some of the present day writers have to be very careful whether their words would be taken and applied for political purposes; and even if they happen to be convinced about the truth of a certain matter, there is a tendency to be very careful or overcautious in pronouncing an opinion; and sometimes this is carried to the unhealthy extent of suppressing facts which are unfavourable to one party and exposing only those which are favourable to their cause. Thus the greater part of the writings are spoiled by that partisan spirit of which some of the writers are even unconscious. But Sir Thomas Munro had no such motives or inducements, and so one can accept his testimony without making any allowance or discount. If the English people had taken a more sympathetic and humane view of the Indian situation, if their naturally fine qualities had not been warped by prejudice and ignorance and pride, they would not have so callously trampled on the feelings of self-respect of the people of the land, though according to some of the English Imperialists these are a monopoly of the British and of other Western nations! But it required considerable self-restraint and great tolerance on the part of

the Britisher — virtues, if present, were not encouraged by the exacting tropical climate, by the peculiarities of their position as a ruling race, and by their limited interests. The only plane on which the two parties could meet — the cultural and intellectual — was difficult of attainment to the vast majority of English people. With very few remarkable exceptions, the greater part of the English residents in India, have betrayed a lamentable lack of interest in the past history of India, in her earlier achievements and culture — a rather poor comment upon English taste and outlook and culture. In the hot Indian climate these finer characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race like intellectual curiosity and artistic expression, quickly evaporated, till it appeared, as if the hard crust of racial frigidity and aloofness remained as the sole constituent of its mental texture.

*The poverty of the people.*—A very influential and all-pervading factor which however did not act with any sudden or violent force, but which nevertheless was equally powerful in bringing about this state of affairs, was the poverty of the land. This is even at present the most important cause preventing a greater friendly contact between the two nationalities. It has resulted in preserving two, if not more, entirely different *sets of standards of life*. The appalling poverty of the masses, which is a peculiarly Indian phenomenon, into whose causes there is no need to enter just now, has effectively barred the possibilities of any friendly approach. India is “the land of famine” as a certain English writer once expressed it, although it is doubtful if the English ever had occasion to suffer from the effects of this chronic destitution. It was the rumour of the enormous wealth of the country

that first brought the English on the scene, and even now it is the hope and expectation of earning a decent amount, a moderate competence, during the course of the few hard years he is compelled to spend in India, which would enable him to live in comparative comfort later, that actuates the average Englishman to undergo all the hardships and trials incidental to the stay in a tropical climate. While he may be assured of a "moderate competence," the days of gathering the plums from the Pagoda Tree are all gone. The point to be noted is, that the fundamental differences in the standards of living of the two communities have remained absolutely distinct, if not irreconcilable. This difference in the standard of life has encouraged the appearance and development of a feeling of aloofness first, and later, of superiority; and it is somewhat evident even in the early days from the words of one of the lady residents who commiserated the hard lot of the inhabitants who lived merely "on rice and curry."

Even from the beginning, the English had attempted with a fair measure of success, to introduce their native ways of life, with the modifications necessary to suit and survive the devastating effects of a hot climate. But as days went by, and as a result of a gradual improvement in the means of communication, their tastes and outlook tended to become more and more Europeanised. Though living in the country for a long time, no effort was made to adapt or to improve upon the indigenous practices. Of course, the English attempted to make their stay as comfortable as possible. The "Punkah" was their peculiar invention, — it is said of a distracted clerk, who hit upon this device in a desperate fit of clerical inspiration. But

on the whole the standard of life of the English settlers tended increasingly to conform to the western standards, which was in itself quite a natural thing, and also a convenient thing. But this was also accompanied by an undisguised contempt for everything that did not fall in with their *insular traditions*, and which consequently came to be condemned as *inferior*. So it may be stated rightly, that the chief cause from the *economic side* which exercised a hostile influence on the problem of racial relations, was the serious cleavage in the standards of life. To what extent the poverty of the people has been reduced, how their condition has been ameliorated during the course of the British rule, it is not necessary to discuss and determine at present. The fact remains however, that any approach at familiarity or friendship was effectively ruled out by the entirely different tastes and standards of living which the two communities maintained and cultivated. "The gravest difficulties which the English administration had to face in India is the extreme poverty of the Indian population," said Mr. Dutt. ("England and India," p. 124.) "It is sad to contemplate that, in spite of a civilised administration, of the construction of railways and canals, of the vast extension of cultivation, and of the prosperity of foreign trade, India is practically desolated by calamities such as are unknown in Europe." ("Dutt, R. C. : "England and India." Preface, p. viii.)

Besides the above-mentioned evils, there was the *generally pliant and unresisting disposition* of the people of the country. It is doubtful if the racial tangle would have become so hopeless, and the presumption of the unrefined class of Englishmen so great, but for the generally peaceful and pliant dis-

position of Indians. For those who were inclined to place greater importance on *physical force*, as the best weapon for gaining their ends, — whatever may be the ideals inculcated by one's religion, — the unresisting character of the people, their submission to the ill-treatment of the foreigner, naturally gave considerable encouragement. But we find the best among the Anglo-Indian administrators, people like Sir Thomas Munro, commenting on this feature and deploring it. While some of the planters exploited this temperamental characteristic of the Indian to the maximum, the other classes of residents were not above falling victims to occasional acts of high-handedness in their relations with the people of the land. The more refined class of Englishmen was generally above the weakness of offensively displaying brute force and bullying the inhabitants of the land. But the temptation to tyrannise was a difficult one to resist. It was that class of Europeans known as "Low Europeans", who were mostly guilty of this social tyranny. These "Low Europeans", and "European Vagabonds", caused considerable anxiety and embarrassment to the administration in India. The misdemeanours of this class of English inhabitants fill 25 volumes in the India Office Records, according to Mr. Spear. They bear eloquent testimony to the superiority of western morals as practised by some of the English people in India in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries! Of these, Volumes II — XXIV appear to be detailed accounts of the various cases, and Volume XXV gives a concise summary of the whole. A perusal of these volumes would throw very significant light on the undeniable superiority of western morality! The

vast majority of the cases, it may be noted, deal with the ill-treatment of Indians. It may be admitted however, that it is *unfair* to judge the conduct of the whole English community in India in the past by the behaviour of the "lower" classes,—by the "black sheep"—among them. While that is true, it must be remembered that the English writers in their conduct under similar circumstances have not exercised a similar discrimination or charity and have labelled the whole class or community of Indians with their indiscriminate accounts. Further, in the face of this fact, the attitude of the English writers that wickedness and vice were almost a monopoly of the Indians and of the Asiatics, and that their countrymen were generally all honourable gentlemen, cannot but be amusing. There is nothing surprising in the conduct of the English historians for forgetting for the time being, in their enthusiasm to expose the rotten nature of Indian character, some of the ugly skeletons in their own national cupboard. I have just singled out only a few instances to show the nature of the conduct of this class of Englishmen in India, as bringing in more of such unpleasant details would mar the attractiveness of the narrative. One case which happened at Tirhut, a village in Mirzaffpur, in Northern India, may be mentioned, since it is typical of many others which took place during the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. There was one William Orby Hunter who was an indigo-planter,—and it was among the indigo-planters that the "largest number of such atrocious acts were committed. He was accused of cruelty against three girls of low caste in the service of Bhangwannah Kowar, with whom Hunter cohabited as his "Bibee." The three girls had



their "noses, ears, and hair cut off and one of them had her tongue cut out; that they had fetters put on their feet, that they were wounded in their private parts and were affected with venereal disease . . . . and that they had been otherwise treated with the greatest cruelty. It was stated by all the females that they had been forcibly violated by Hunter, and one of them stated that she, under a sense of dishonour, had attempted to drown herself in a well. The Governor-General ordered a re-trial, and during the course of the proceedings the guilt of the whole party came out. . . . Thousand rupees were ordered to be paid to each of the three girls. Hunter was given a fine of Rs. 100." This was not an altogether isolated case, though very few reached the enormity of this offence. But a perusal of some of these records shows clearly the fact, that the "low class of Europeans," and even the planters were guilty of the most heinous acts of oppression, ill-treatment, and cruelty, some of which are as revolting as those indignities heaped upon the negroes during the days of slavery.

One of the reasons why this tyranny flourished unchecked was that there were no adequate means for redress. The court used to be far away from the scene of action, and very seldom the victims had the money to file a suit. Often it was from the dread of vengeance of the white inhabitants that the "natives" kept quiet. In 1796, two men, Richard and Johnson, were accused of the ill-treatment of ryots. The report of the Court sent through Mr. James Stuart, Deputy Registrar of the Nizam Adalat at Tirhut, accused them of the following:—"Illegal exertion of the magisterial authority by putting the prisoners, Bholah and Mussumant Bussee, Bholah's

wife, in irons, confining them on the stocks, flogging Bholah, putting them in fear of their lives, and finally publicly exposing the said Bholah and his wife Bussee by beat of Dowj (drum) on asses with their faces turned towards the animals' tails." The villagers through fear refused to proceed against the Englishman. The villagers in Bengal welcomed Carey, because he differed so remarkably from his countrymen "who were worse than tigers." ("Serampore Letters." 15th February, 1794, p. 41.) Abbe Dubois attributes the decline of Christian missions in the eighteenth century to the looseness of English morality, "in a great degree to the immoral and irregular conduct of the Europeans in every part of the country." ("Letters on the state of Christianity in India," p. 17.) The remark of an Indian to one English Chaplain is not without its grim humour and irony. "Christian Religion! Devil Religion!" Christian much drink, much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others." (J. Page: "Schwartz of Tanjore.")

Another Indian merchant remarked to Schwartz: "You astonish me, from what we daily observe and experience we cannot but think them (Europeans), with very few exceptions, to be self-interested, incontinent, proud, full of illiberal contempt and prejudice against the Hindus, and even against their own religion, especially the higher classes." (Dubois: "Letters on the state of Christianity.") The current view of the ordinary Indian towards the European settlers is admirably epitomised in the unaffected and simple retort of a girl pupil of a Hindu dancing master, who, when told by Schwartz that no unholy or wicked person could possibly enter the Kingdom of Heaven, replied:—"Alas, sir, in that case hardly any

*European* will ever enter it!" (J. Page: "Schwartz of Tanjore.")

The high-handedness of the Indigo-planters is very well illustrated in the evidence supplied by Sir Thomas Munro before the Committee of 1813. "I find no difference in traders, whether their habits are quiet or not when they quit the country; they are very seldom quiet when they find themselves among an *unresisting* people over whom they can exercise their authority, for every trader going into India is considered as some person connected with Government. I have heard that within two or three years, I think in Bengal in 1810, private traders — indigo merchants — have put inhabitants in the stocks, have assembled their followers and given battle to each other, and that many have been wounded." ("Sir Thomas Munro's Evidence," p. 138.) The words "unresisting people" cannot be improved. If there has been one contributory factor which has both passively and actively encouraged the arrogance of the westerner, it is this dislike of force, a philosophy which is even now being applied by some of the Indian political leaders which the western imagination, though supposed to be familiar with the teachings of Christ, has apparently failed to understand, to appreciate, and to apply. If the Indians, whether by tradition, or by the influence of their religious teaching, or perhaps by the decline which set in by submission to foreign yoke for a very long time, or for other reasons, did not retaliate, then it was interpreted as a sign of their inferiority. Thus the attitude grew up that since the people of India did not make use of the 'fist' in their arguments they are naturally a poor, lifeless, people! The comparative ease with which the different military victories were

won by the foreigners, only served to confirm this impression. From that source also the feeling of superiority of the English received considerable reinforcement. There are numerous other cases of misbehaviour, oppression, and tyranny during this period which have not been brought in here since one has no desire to emulate Miss Mayo!

It is highly significant that the English who consider themselves the descendants, if not the legal inheritors, of the Roman Imperial traditions, should have adopted, perhaps somewhat unconsciously, the different expedients and practices which prevailed in the Roman Empire. "In this divine hierarchy (for such it is infrequently styled)" — whether it is from this the epithet "heaven-born service" referring to the Indian Civil Service, sprang up, it is interesting to speculate, — "every rank was marked with the most scrupulous exactness and its dignity was displayed in a variety of trifling ceremonies, which it was a study to learn and a sacrilege to neglect." (Gibbon: "Decline and Fall," Vol. II, Chapter XVII.) "The principal officers of the Empire were saluted, even by the Emperor, with the deceitful titles of "Your Eminence," "Your Gravity," "Your Sublime" (not however "Your Ridiculous") and "Wonderful Magnitude," "Your Illustrious and Magnificent Highness." The Codicils or patents of their office were curiously emblazoned with such emblems as were best adapted to explain its nature and high dignity; the image or portrait of the reigning Emperors; a triumphal car, the book of mandates placed on a table, covered with a rich carpet, and illuminated by four tapers, the allegorical figures of the provinces which they governed, or the appellations and standards of the troops whom they commanded.

Some of these official ensigns were really exhibited in their hall of audience, others preceded their pompous march whenever they appeared in public, and every circumstance of their demeanour, their dress, their ornaments, and their train, were calculated to inspire a deep reverence for the representative of a Supreme Majesty."

"By a philosophic observer the system of the Roman Government might have been mistaken for a splendid theatre, filled with players of every character and degree, who repeated the language and imitated the passions of their original model." If one had only a modicum of the literary and artistic genius which Gibbon possessed, one could have attempted to describe its Indian counterpart. But to attempt it without that qualification would be to commit heraldic sacrilege. It is not surprising, that the English when they had to build up an administrative structure, deliberately borrowed from this classical model. The greatest tribute that can be paid to a member of the English aristocracy appears to be to compare him to the "Noble Romans." It is only natural, therefore, that when they were building up an administrative edifice for India, they should have accepted completely the Roman inspiration, even though the Moghul one also provided them with plenty of assistance. There appears on the face of it a strong probability, that the officer who was first responsible for the introduction of the system of awarding honours and titles in India, — where it is a highly-organised and regular annual administrative routine now, because of the different tastes and communities and ranks that have to be satisfied — must have undergone a special course of study on the Roman Imperial practice. "All the

magistrates of sufficient importance to find a place in the general state of the Empire, were accurately divided into three classes: (1) The "Illustrious," (2) The "Spectabiles" or "Respectable," (3) The "Clarissimi" which may be translated as "Honourable." (Idem, Chapter I, p. 26.) There appears to be some strong presumptive evidence in favour of the view that a few of the titles of honour now conferred by the British like "His Excellency," "His Exalted Highness," and "Right Honourable" to the more fortunate individuals; and "Rao Bahadur," "Diwan Bahadur," "Khan Sahib," etc., to those at the bottom rungs in this Honours ladder, were adapted also from the Roman practice, whenever the Persian and Moghul precedents were found inadequate.

## CHAPTER X

### *Defects in the attitude of superiority based on the moral argument*

The presence of the Eurasian community is the most unpleasant fact which has to be explained away, before the doctrine of Western superiority can be completely accepted by the people in India. Many uncomplimentary, if not bitter and undeserved, things have been written and spoken about the unfortunate class of Eurasians. "In wading through what has been written about the Eurasians what strikes me very much is the ingenuity in word and phrase which has been expended in describing the dreadfulness of their characters. Surely if any one's wickedness has been clearly and artistically explained to him it is the unfortunate Eurasian's," remarks Mr. Skipton in "Our Reproach in India." "It is largely due to mistakes of policy in the early years of our regime that a numerous mixed race has sprung;" but whether the mistake is that of the settlers, or that of the government, the mischief was done. The lower class of Europeans were "driven to make alliances, regular as well as irregular, with the women of the country, by the iniquitous rule of the Indian government of the day which ordered that English maid-servants brought out to India by English ladies should be sent back to England within two years, thus practically making it impossible for these girls to marry Europeans in the country." (Skipton: "Our Reproach in India," p. 2.)

From the days of the Portuguese settlements in India, there was inter-mixture between the European inhabitants and Indian women. In 1689 Dampier wrote:—"The Breed of them is scattered all over India, neither are there any people of more different Complexion than of that Race, even from the coal-black to the light Tawney." Bishop Heber was not very wrong when he wrote, "I never met with any public men connected with India who did not lament the increase of the half-caste population as a great source of danger to the tranquillity of the colony. Why then forbid the introduction of a class of women who would furnish white wives to the white colonist, and so far at least diminish the evil of which they complain?" ("Heber's Journal," Volume I, p. 26.) The rapidly rising stream of such half-castes was supplied not only from the pure English sources, but also from the French, who were free from "that exclusive and intolerant spirit which makes the English wherever they go, *a caste by themselves, disliking and disliked by all their neighbours*," remarks again Bishop Heber. The Eurasian inherited from his paternal side in no small measure this "foolish, surly, national pride" as the Bishop so aptly puts it. But it is not merely the pride of the Eurasian progeny that is inexplicable, but the *superior morality* of the Westerner who spurned his offspring! As if the nature of his origin was not a sufficient handicap for the Eurasian, the government also adopted some penal measures. In 1792 the Supreme Government enacted that "no one whose father or mother belonged to a race native of the country, might be employed in the civil, military, or marine services of the company, nor command one of the Company's ships." (F. E. Penny: "On the Coromandel Coast," 1908, pp. 139-140.)



"Further restrictions were heaped upon them later. In 1795, it was proclaimed that no man unless descended from European parents on both sides might serve in the European battalions, except as musicians," — their music seems to have been quite orthodox and agreeable to the ears of the sanctimonious authorities! There were many who blamed the government for this state of affairs. The situation is not unfairly described by Sir Andrew Fraser, — once a prominent member of the Madras Government, — as a "disgrace to the British nation and one which threatens to become a danger to the Empire."

Many harsh words have been said about this class, quite undeservedly, in many cases. "Despised by the East, disowned by the West, the Eurasians are the standing monuments of European immorality," once remarked very caustically a certain Indian public speaker. "Their history constitutes the most utterly discreditable and disgusting episode in the whole history of English rule in India. Crushed between the mill-stones of racial hatred, despised by both progenitors, debarred by rules as rigid as the medieval sumptuary laws from success in business or the services, robbed of its original preserves, such as the railways which it built, and prevented from the intransigent prejudice of the white continents from emigrating, this unfortunate body of people, already sufficiently wretched in their restrictions, sees itself condemned to a future of poverty and degradation unrelieved by hope. Such is its position between the two races, that the creation of a separate Anglo-Indian state has been seriously adumbrated as the only means of ensuring to the community a normal possibility of livelihood and independence." (Byron: "An Essay

on India.”) That the Indians are not always disposed to treat this somewhat fortuitous product of their social soil with any special consideration is not unnatural, when that presumptuous product has all along betrayed a strong tendency to look down upon the Indians! But how pathetic becomes the situation when the other party is not very anxious to admit the responsibility, nay, not even to recognise the relationships.

In the emotional, pathetic, and touching words of Mr. Stark, who sent in a memorandum on behalf of his despised and poverty-stricken community, there is an eloquent appeal to the Englishmen to attempt some posthumous retribution to the unmerited sufferings of this unfortunate class, which is naturally nervous of its fate under the New Reforms. “When full measure of self-government is given to India, what will be the fate of our descendants and kinsmen in that land? In the circumstances we must look to the British Parliament to safeguard our interests, our religion, our education, our admission into the public services. If India is to have Dominion Status, England must demand, India must guarantee, that we are effectively protected as citizens of India. . . . O England! who are these if not thy sons? . . . . A sullen echo in the clubs of Bombay and the drawing rooms of Calcutta and Madras answers, ‘Who’?” What does ordinary conventional morality say of an individual who refused to admit and to contribute his share to the welfare of his offspring? Still the claim to *moral* superiority has been very tenaciously held and advanced by the English residents in India. On such moral foundations rest partly the claim to superiority which the West has urged. Discussing eloquently the problem of the “Eurasians” in India, Mr. Skipton rightly says:—

"Politically and morally we have arrears to make up." ("Our Reproach in India".) But the Englishman is seldom a debtor in the tropics!

The following article which appeared in the "Anglo-Indian" in June, 1933,—the contributor has signed himself an "Anglo-Indian"—contains some striking reflections on the attitude of the present day Englishman towards this community, and indirectly on the *superior moral claims* which the English residents have invariably urged over against those of the people of India. "There is a mischievous tendency on the part of both Europeans and Indians to judge us by our "*worst*" specimens. Of late years this tendency is becoming very marked. Yet if we judge them from a similar viewpoint, they are up-in-arms at once and ready to resent it. In this case what is sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander!"

"In spite of everything we have done to help the British, we have been doubted and mistrusted, hounded and crushed. The process is still going on." This is partly because some among the present generation of Englishmen do not like to take upon themselves the responsibility for the sins of their forefathers; and they fail to appreciate very much the demands of a community whose presence in India is not calculated to enhance their "prestige." The sins of the older generations have been visited on the third and fourth generations of Englishmen. The European fathers have eaten sour grapes "and the children's teeth are on edge."

"While Europeans appear to stand aghast at the idea that Temple entry and social amenities have been denied the unfortunate depressed classes," continues

this Anglo-Indian contributor, "*they are the first to treat us as social outcastes*, whenever an opportunity occurs. *This is not the case with properly educated persons.*" A very pertinent remark. That is exactly the trouble with the manifestation of the English caste system in India. The history of social relations with the people of India also would have told a more pleasant story, if there had been more of *cultured* people among the Englishmen here; people who were able to value things at their proper value and importance. One can whole-heartedly endorse the view that it is the Englishman whose culture — if any — is not sufficiently deep to evaluate things in their proper manner, whose mental equipment is a regular tissue of racial and national prejudices, who had inherited or acquired the maximum pride and arrogance, that has been guilty of this monstrous attitude.

"It is the 'half-educated' European, with whom the country is flooded," continues this writer "who is persistent in this attitude towards the unfortunate Anglo-Indian, probably to show his own damned superiority; and possibly because he knows the Anglo-Indian to be a better educated man than himself. Between this, and the hatred which the Indian bears, chiefly because of the help we have given the British, at all times of trouble, and of our loyalty to our king," he sees a very dismal prospect. But the writer is utterly, woefully, mistaken if he thinks that the Indians have any deep hatred towards his community. What ill-feeling there might exist between them and the Indians, is wholly the result of the attitude of his own community, and of that "*damned superiority*" which he so vigorously denounces among the English! He next deplores the fact that because of these things

"the chances of the Anglo-Indian procuring even a precarious living in India, are very remote."

The "Anglo-Indian" then discusses the economy that would follow to the Indian tax-payer from the creation of Eurasian regiments in place of the English ones. He also describes the state of utter destitution to which his community had been reduced and says:—"In the meanwhile, most of us will have to imitate the example of Gandhi, and enter into a prolonged fast, not however from choice, but from force of circumstances." How far such a weapon would move the heart of the English community in India is a doubtful question!

The special claim which the Europeans in India urge for trial by English juries is also discussed. "Trial by a European jury amounts to this. A European could at all times claim to be tried by a European jury, but an Anglo-Indian must first prove legitimate descent to be so tried. If he is illegitimate his claim falls. There are two brothers. One is the son of a European father by an Indian woman to whom she is not married—and such occasions were not infrequent in the past. "Later on he gets rid of her," as one gets rid of one's old clothes, and "marries" an Indian woman by whom also he has a son. The son by the latter wife could claim to be tried by a European jury, and succeed, but not the son by the "unmarried wife,"—the expression "unmarried wife" is extremely amusing and very original—"though both are sons of the same father. One feels inclined to question the mentality of those who drew up such a monstrous code of rules." While this "Anglo-Indian" contributor is only inclined to question the "mentality" of those who drew such monstrous "code of rules,"

the feeling of the people of India is lost in the difficult task of understanding the morality of some of these people who have always claimed a higher standard in these matters. Perhaps that is not for the comprehension of the inferior Indians!

Drawing a very pessimistic picture of the condition of the Eurasian community, which finds itself placed between the Scylla of the Englishman's contempt, and the Charybdis of the Indian's dislike, this writer adds:—"What is there then, for the unfortunate Anglo-Indian, when the Indians take over the reins of Government, under the new Federal Constitution? For him,

"His future lot is a sable lot,  
And life, an impossible dream."

"Both England and India, know, whom we have to thank for it. The law of retribution never fails." ("Anglo-Indian.") But this "Anglo-Indian" contributor may be assured that if his community got over the habit of despising the people of the land, a quality which it has inherited from its paternal side; the Indian morality and feelings of charity, inferior though they may be to the western varieties, would not reject them altogether. But it all depends on their powers of adaptability.

If the unfortunate and unpleasant case of the Eurasians has been considered in a little detailed manner, it is only to show that it is extremely amusing to the Indians to hear of the higher standard of corporate morality which most of the English arrogate to themselves, and that the Indian finds this superiority which the westerner claims and exercises in India, as something strange and inexplicable. Under such circumstances the "white escutcheon of unsullied

morality" of the illustrious Lord Birkenhead becomes rather grey on close scrutiny with a tendency to change into a darker hue. The words of another English writer would effectively answer this claim to moral superiority, if any further refutation is necessary. "Your moral argument answers itself. There is corruption in Indian life as there is corruption in English life. It is only a matter of degree. There is no difference in kind." (S. P. Kerr: "From Charing Cross to Delhi.")

*Nor is the moral aspect of the process of British expansion such as would always warrant the uninterrupted paeans that have been frequently forthcoming from the British press and platform. To the vast majority of Englishmen, there is nothing but a glow of triumphant exultation at the contemplation of this scene of "one of the greatest triumphs of our race," as Lord Ronaldshay puts it. Either a too close survey of, or an extremely casual and superficial acquaintance with, the whole Indian drama appears to have often blurred the vision of the admiring onlookers to the glaringly bad patches that are apparent to others. Even Lord Macaulay was compelled to apologise for some of the serious relapses. There may be a few exceptional men like Burke who ventured to denounce the immorality of the procedure. But in all other cases there is discreet silence whenever there are compromising incidents. The standards of judgment are often altogether inverted. The sins and wickedness of the Asiatics are painted in flaming colours. But the virtues and nobility of British character are represented in the most favourable light; the grave blemishes in English character being passed over by a few exonerating comments about the "extraordi-*

nary circumstances," and a few references to the "corrupt, unscrupulous officials" (Indian) with whom they were brought into contact.

The superiority of western morals was unquestionably accepted even in the early days of English connection. "And having stated at large what he means by saying that the same actions have not the same qualities in Asia and in Europe, we are to let your lordships know that the gentlemen have formed a *plan of geographical morality*, by which the duties of men in public and private institutions are not to be governed by their relations to the great Governor of the Universe, or by their relations to men; but by climate, degrees of longitude, and latitude, parallels not of life but of latitudes; as if, when you have crossed the equinoctial line, all the virtues die, as they say some animals die, when they cross the line, as if, there were a kind of baptism, like that preached by seamen, by which they unbaptize themselves of all that they learned in Europe, and commence a new order and system of things. This geographical morality we do protest against," remarked Burke most eloquently during his speech at the "Trial of Warren Hastings." If their moral qualities disappeared with the rounding of the Cape, the void was partly filled up by the new racial peculiarities. But Burke appears to be almost a solitary and a grand exception. In all other cases the authorities in England, "the cheese-mongers of Leaden Hall Street" as they were contemptuously called, and their final master, Parliament; whose attention was invariably absorbed by the numerous domestic and foreign complications, were not always directly concerned with, or mindful of, the *morality* of the procedure, as long as dividends were regularly forth-



coming to satisfy the clamorous demands of the share-holders.

A careful examination of the rapid stages of the East India Company's career of expansion reveals the fact that the argument of moral superiority has to be considerably and frequently strained to justify its conduct, and that the process of conquest was not always so sublime as to release the flood-gates of eloquence of English politicians, or the rhetoric of English historians. Nevertheless, this attitude has been responsible from the *political side* in strengthening the attitude of racial superiority. While it was the terrible disunion of the land that primarily favoured the extension of English power, together with the military superiority and discipline of the English troops, the manner in which a few of the annexations were made cannot be easily defended and justified except by casuistical writers. Some are altogether indefensible, and no amount of varnishing could succeed in hiding their ugliness. The annexation of Sindh, the Afghan War of Auckland, the actions of Warren Hastings, a good many of the measures of Wellesley, the conduct of the Burmese war, these and others cannot be defended on moral grounds. It is easy to quote extensively from the minutes, correspondence, and despatches of the various Governors-General, or of their secretaries, to show that in these cases and in others, moral principles did not seriously disturb the administration in its policy. It is perhaps natural, that the imposing appearance of the Imperial edifice, particularly from a distance, should render the onlookers in India and in England, who are ignorant of the nature of its construction, blind to the compromising materials used in the foundations of the building. The treat-

ment of Omichund by Clive, the rapacity and oppression of the English in Bengal in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the affairs of the Begums of Oudh during the days of Warren Hastings, the treatment of the Indian States by Wellesley, who suffered from an acute attack of "Franco-phobia," these and others would hardly redound to the credit of the English. A good many of the Indian States were conquered by downright brow-beating as well as by superior strategy, cunning, and military efficiency. If there is a good deal to boast of, to gloat over in this achievement, as is done in "Lives of a Bengal Lancer," there is also a good deal to be sorry for, to be ashamed of, in the process. But to the glorious galaxy of jingoistic apostles and martyrs whose philosophy consists in maintaining that "success covers a multitude of national and individual sins" the history of Indian conquest would be always a unique, and an unparalleled achievement, demonstrating the redoubtable superiority and conclusive triumph, not only of western armaments, but also of western morality!

If and when, the East India Company changed its activities and launched out on a policy of conquest in the muddy, but attractive, waters of Indian politics, it was always with a view to protect the interests of the Indians, to improve their conditions; and seldom with a thought about the material advantages which the Company would reap! Wellesley harped constantly on the theme of "British honour, justice and interests." A perusal of the despatches of the different Governors-General, particularly of Wellesley—the master of tiresome moral platitudes, whose minutes and despatches breathed throughout the spirit of tender solicitude for the material and spiritual welfare of the

victims whom he successively immolated at the Imperial altar; would convey the impression that the process of expansion was always inspired by altruistic impulses and unimpeachable motives of disinterested charity and sympathy; that whenever the East India Python strangled its victims, it was only with a view to terminate their earthly troubles and difficulties! "We will send our younger sons to humanise the Hindus," goes one of the lines in a Ballad composed by Henry Torrens, an Anglo-Indian poet. In many cases the process of humanisation was extremely short.

When Sir Charles Napier occupied Scinde, he submitted a very significant description and an explanation of the proceedings. "If sticklers for abstract rights maintain—as no doubt they will—that to prevent a man from doing mischief is to enslave him, then it might be called hard to enforce rigid observance of these treaties, but this is not the case. The evident object of these treaties is to favour our Indian interests, by the abolition of barbarism, by ameliorating the condition of society, and by obliging the Ameers (the chieftains in Scinde) to do in compliance with treaties, that which honourable and civilised rulers would do of their own accord." "*Honourable and civilised rulers*" would behave as Clive behaved towards Omichund, as Warren Hastings treated the Begums of Oudh and Rajah Chet Singh of Benares, as Wellesley towards Tippu, as Auckland towards the Ameers of Afghanistan, as Napier towards the Ameers of Scinde, as Dalhousie towards the Burmese, and as other "*Honourable and Civilised Rulers*" behaved from time to time towards petty Indian rulers! "It is very necessary," wrote Sir Charles Napier, "to keep this

fact in view because although the desire to do good would not sanction a breach of treaty on our part, it does sanction our exacting a rigid adherence to the treaties on the part of the Ameers; and the more so, that their attempt to break such treaties, evinces *the barbarism of these princes*, their total want of feeling for their subjects and their own unfitness to govern a country. These things must always be kept in mind, or what I am about to say will appear unjust, which is not the case," reported this considerate Knight who was anxious to terminate the earthly sufferings of the sick man of Scinde with a benign glow of self-complacency and a periodical fit of imperialistic altruism. The "barbarism" of the princes in breaking treaties was redeemed by the "justice" of Sir Charles Napier and others in over-throwing them!

Commenting upon the proceedings and behaviour of this gallant and honourable commander, Sir Charles Napier; Mountstuart Elphinstone, the scholarly Governor of Bombay, and one of the most eminent of the Anglo-Indian administrators and historians, wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe on the 14th March, 1844, as follows:—"Scinde was a sad scene of oppression and insolence. Coming after Afghanistan, it put one in mind of a bully who had been kicked in the streets and went home to beat his wife in revenge." (Kaye: "Lives of Indian Officers," p. 435.) In order to appreciate the appropriateness of this undignified and unchivalrous, but apt comparison, it is necessary to recall the circumstances under which the arbitrary annexation of Scinde (Sindh) took place. The Afghan war had ended disastrously for the English. It was high time to rehabilitate the honour of the British name, to restore the prestige of the English arms in some way

or other. "We have no right to seize Scinde, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, *humane piece of rascality it will be*. My present position is not to my liking. We have no right to come here, and we are tarred with the Afghan brush." (Sir Charles Napier.) Commenting upon this act of wanton aggression Mr. Torrens, M.P., wrote:—"Scinde was a sad scene of insolence and oppression." ("Empire in Asia".) "I think enough will be remembered to show that the Scinde case is one that justice (sweeten it however much you may)" — and the East India Company's servants in India had a peculiar knack for sweetening the pill meant for the consumption of their masters in England—"will find too nauseous to swallow." (E. B. Eastwick: "Dry Leaves from Young Egypt," p. 232.) But some of the English historians, and a good many of the Conservatives, can swallow this and other pills, provided they have an *imperial flavour* about them. "Many believe that a really Christian empire would obtain world-wide sovereignty by the voluntary and eager resort of all nations under the shadow of its wings. Whether by such a means as these Great Britain shall accomplish the dominion of the East, remains to be seen. We have not, I fear, made an auspicious beginning. But if we were to gain no more by virtue, let us not lose what we have by injustice. Let us hasten to wipe out the awful rebuke passed by the natives of their Christian conquerors, as they were led away into captivity, "Now, we perceive that there is no hope for us of judgment or justice until God Almighty shall sit in the last great Adawlut." (Speech of Lord Ashley. "Debate in the House of Commons on the Ameers of Scinde," 8th February, 1844.) But the Indian is finding that the

*racial wings* of the British under which he has sought protection are equally scorching, and that there is very little difference under it and outside it. Perhaps the opinion of one more English writer may be quoted in this connection. "I have all along said, and ever shall say under all circumstances, and in all societies and places where I may hear it alluded to, that the case of the Ameers of Scinde is the most unprincipled and disgraceful that has ever stamped the annals of our Empire in India. No reasoning can, in my opinion, remove the foul stain it has left on our faith and honour," — on "the white escutcheon of unsullied morality," about which the late Lord Birkenhead waxed very eloquent, — "and as I know more than any other man living of previous events and measures connected with that devoted country, I feel that I have a full right to exercise my judgment and express my sentiments on the subject. I cannot use too strong language in expressing my disgust and sorrow." (Sir Henry Pottinger: "Letter to Morning Chronicle," 8th January, 1844.) If the case of the Ameers of Scinde has been dealt with at such great length, it is only because the English writers and speakers themselves have condemned the proceedings unhesitatingly. If there had been other Englishmen equally courageous and outspoken, the history of a good many of the other incidents also would be found to belong to the same category. If the English public had been equally vigilant and assertive on the incident of the Rohillas during the days of Hastings, — Burke exposed it a bit later — of Afghan war during the days of Auckland, of Burmese War during the days of Dalhousie, and of many others; the history of English conquest of India would have told a different and a more creditable tale.

But the English public either through ignorance, indifference, or a false sense of national honour, have generally nothing but the most unbounded praise for the conduct of their countrymen in India, whether individual or corporate. One does not insinuate by this that the conduct of the English in India has been worse than the conduct of the other European powers, or that other Indian and European governments would have behaved better. Far from that. The difficulty comes in when there is a general attitude, a common attempt, to picture the conduct of their countrymen in India as unexceptionable; and to point out the moral superiority of the British over that of others, by English writers and speakers. The English administration is not guilty of any extraordinary crime in the course of their conquests. But when these are *defended on high moral principles by English historians* there is trouble in reconciling such a view with the known facts of history. This *moral air of superiority* is frequently and offensively manifested by a good many of the English writers and politicians at present. One has no intention to place the nature of the English conquest in any particularly unfavourable light. It is not at all difficult to do that. But I am simply trying to show that it is the tone of moral superiority assumed with very little foundation by some people, that is partly responsible for the patronising air assumed by the modern politicians, which irritates and galls the Indian mind. Any other government placed in similar circumstances would have behaved in the same manner. But to hold out the English conduct, as the late Lord Birkenhead did, and many lords at present do, who are either ignorant of the true nature of Indian history, or like Nelson apply the telescope to the blind

eye pretending that they cannot see anything compromising; as being always influenced by high ideals, is a serious misreading of the events of Indian history. It is this attitude that has been in no small measure responsible for the air of *political pharisaism and consequently of racial pride*. One would not have cared to bring out some of these unpleasant incidents in the past history of English occupation in India, but for the fact that they are essential to controvert the attitude of altruism, of a tone of superior morality, adopted by some of the English writers. Other unfavourable and compromising incidents have not been brought in, since they might irritate some of the English readers. The only object in mentioning them is to show that the tone of moral superiority which is assumed without any foundation by the English is proving mischievous at present.

Some of the readers might be interested to know the real reason for this despicable and high-handed treatment of the Ameers of Scinde which comes out in the "Despatches" of Napier. "I (Napier) have always begged of Major Outram to give me a memorandum of the state in which the Treaty with the Ameers, for the purchase of Shikarpore remains, as it has been in abeyance last year." From this memorandum it would appear, that in addition to the great advantages to Sukkur which would attend the occupation of Shikarpore, "this district would be a very valuable acquisition in point of revenue in time; and could with the aid of Kurrachee (Karachi) *meet the expense of guarding our newly acquired towns* on the banks of the Indus." This despatch of Napier is typical of a good many others as well, particularly of Wellesley. Thus one finds often self-interest masque-



rating under the guise of benevolence, of altruism, of disinterested consideration for others!

The Ameers of Scinde pleaded the sanctity of previous treaties which had exempted them from further demands of the Indian Government. Outram, who was in charge of the matter, found himself placed in an awkward situation. He wrote to Calcutta for instruction saying, "how this is to be got over I do not myself see." The reply he received from the Governor-General is amusing. "The Governor-General was of opinion that it is not incumbent on the British government to enter into any formal investigation of the plea adduced by the Ameers." (Thornton: "History of British India," p. 589.) The historian of the war in Scinde and the eulogist of his brother's conduct remarked:—"This was the first open encroachment of the independence of the Ameers. It is impossible to mistake or deny the injustice. Was not this simply an impudent attempt to steal away the country? The proposal to mediate was less immoral than subtle; the object was profit, covered with a sickening declamation about friendship, justice, and love of peace—all of which recognised Scinde as an independent power." (Lieut.-Eastwick, 26th January, 1839.)

The public attitude towards Indian affairs was profoundly influenced by the nature of the situation in England and her foreign complications. The conquests and annexations of Wellesley, which were conducted on the same plan, did not attract the attention of Parliament and of the country. England was at that time engaged in a life and death struggle with Napoleon. That was not the time to enquire scrupulously into the manner in which

the annexations were made in India. Every victory was madly hailed by a country whose mind was absorbed in the one task of outwitting Napoleon. Similarly, when it came to the annexations and wars in Afghanistan, there was the fear of Russia which warped the vision of the English. Sometimes they were plunged in their elections and other domestic political fights. Very few had the knowledge necessary to criticise the conduct of their countrymen in India. Even if this existed, it was considered *unpatriotic* to denounce the actions of the administration here. The man on the spot knew his business well. It would be mischievous to interfere. It was only when some of the ugly details reached England that a few among the politicians, whose sense of fair play had not been distorted by imperial prejudices, raised their voice of protest. Thus, indifference, ignorance, self-interest, a sense of prestige, and the pride of conquest served to deaden the conscience of the English public. Lord Brougham might say in the "Debate on Affairs in Afghanistan," that "there is no expediency in the course which the Governor-General has pursued; there is no justice in the policy he has pursued." (9th March, 1839. Hansard, Vol. xlv, col. 869.) Richard Cobden might denounce the injustice of the war against Burma which Lord Dalhousie waged, on the ground that the British flag had been dishonoured, when all that had happened was that the Burmese government had punished the English master of a trading barque from Chittagong for cruelty to a pilot with a fine of £100. But to support the claim for restitution two English war-ships were sent to the mouth of the Irawadi. The Burmese Governor who was guilty of the act had been already removed. But the arrangements for war were ready. The

English captured a Burmese royal vessel lying in the river. War followed. "Where lies the necessity of annexing any part of Burmah, if it be not our interest to do so," asked Cobden. ("The Origin of the Burmese War," p. 58. Richard Cobden, M.P.) The real explanation is given by the historian who has written on the period of Dalhousie. "Dalhousie was determined to take in kingdoms whenever they made a gap in the red line running round his dominions or broke its internal continuity." ("Dalhousie's Administration of British India," Vol. II, p. 12. E. Arnold.) It was the same passion for "imperial symmetry," as his biographer puts it, that was responsible for the burial of a large number of victims in the political cemetery.

It is also another interesting fact of Indian history that the voice of protest against wanton aggression that continued to proceed till the middle of the nineteenth century in a very feeble and intermittent fashion, almost disappeared during the second part of the nineteenth century. There were a few reasons which would explain the change of attitude. For one thing, the progress of Russia through Central Asia to the vicinity of Afghanistan proved an ever-present nightmare, which haunted the slumbers, as well as the ordinary vision, of the statesmen at Westminster and at Simla. It was necessary to counteract this gradual menacing advance of the Russian Bear. All the intervening tribes had to be brought under control some way or other, and the frontiers of India were to be pushed to their utmost "scientific" limits.

Further, there was also another reason which contributed towards this complacent attitude of English government and public towards the policy of the government in India. There was a scramble for possessions,

for carving out "spheres of influence," for "pegging out claims for posterity," as it has been said, among the European powers in Africa, in the Far East, in China and other countries of Asia. The people in England did not care to scrutinise very closely whether the conduct of the Government in India was always dictated by righteous principles. Thus it happened, that the doctrine of imperialism came to approve, to sanctify, the conduct of the English in India. Besides, the feeling that it was the duty of the more advanced nations to take under their protection and tutelage the less advanced nations, came to be consciously and aggressively held. There was no question under such circumstance about the morality or immorality of conquests and annexations. It was the duty of a superior civilisation to lead the others to their own level. If the less advanced lands refused to fall in line with these schemes, they were to be conquered, and the blessings of peace were to be forced on them. Thus it came about, that the doctrine of imperialism cast a halo of righteousness over the conduct of its exponents, and we find poets like Kipling singing hallelujahs in praise of this attitude and behaviour. This view, that it is the task of countries like England and America and France to lead the other nations through the strange and narrow path of civilisation on to the City of God, has been in no small measure responsible for the determination not to relax their hold on the "backward" countries till they are considered fit to be released. Some of the "civilised nations have been sitting tightly on the *back* of the "backward" nations! The English imagination is overwhelmed and occasionally confounded by the rush of proud memories when it contemplates the grandeur of this unparalleled expansion. There is little room

or chance for individual or national reflection, to examine whether the foundations of these proceedings are based on justice and righteousness. "That empire is itself the strangest of all political anomalies. That a handful of adventures from an island in the Atlantic should have subjugated a vast country divided from the place of their birth by half the globe, a country which at no distant period was merely the subject of fable to the nations of Europe, a country never before violated by the most renowned of western conquerors, a country which Trajan never entered. . . . . *Reason is confounded*; we interrogate the past in vain," remarks Macaulay with an enthusiasm which can be hardly equalled by a modern Conservative. Thus amidst the distractions of party strife in England, amidst the European entanglements, amidst the colonial pre-occupations, the course of development in India and in the East has not been followed with the same attention and thoroughness which they demanded and deserved. It is not in the least surprising, therefore, that there is a general tendency to justify, to extol the conduct of their countrymen in the East. But if the circumstances have been as vigilantly followed as Burke did, and as Bright did at a subsequent date, the blemishes in the conduct of their individual and corporate conduct would have been fully apparent. Even if by chance some of them did happen to know some of the things that were taking place in the East, there was not the same courage and determination to bring them into the fierce light of publicity, to denounce them, fearing they might fall in the estimation of their neighbouring European countries, lest their *prestige* would suffer. Thus it has come about that the attitude of racial superiority has been fed with this atti-

tude of moral exaltation springing from pride in their military achievements.

Macaulay had the intellectual courage and moral honesty, when he was convinced of an error — the trouble was only to make him see it — to admit the defects of English occupation at times, while the modern politicians have nothing but unreserved approval and unfeigned admiration. "It is true that the early history of this great revolution (the Revolution in Bengal) is chequered with guilt and shame. . . . It is true that with some of the highest qualities of the race from which they sprang, they combined some of the worst defects of the race over which they ruled. How should it have been otherwise? *Born in humble stations, accustomed to earn a slender maintenance by obscure industry, they found themselves transformed in a few months from clerks trudging over desks, or captains in marching regiments, into statesmen and generals, with armies at their command, with the revenues of kingdoms at their disposal, with power to make and depose sovereigns at their pleasure. They were, what it was natural that men should be, who had been raised by so rapid an ascent to so dizzy an eminence, profuse and rapacious, imperious and corrupt.*" (Speeches of Macaulay.) "The danger is that the newcomers belonging to the ruling nation resembling in *colour*, in language, in manner, those who hold supreme military and practical power and differing in all these respects," — particularly in their colour — "from the great mass of the population, *may consider themselves a superior class, and may trample on the indigenous race.*" . . . . "Hitherto there were strong restraints on European residents in India. Licences were not easily obtained.

Those residents who were in the service of the Company had obvious motives for conducting themselves with propriety. If they incurred the serious displeasure of the government their hopes of promotion were blighted. Even those who were not in the public service, were subject to the formidable power which the government possessed of banishing them at pleasure . . . . .”

Another Prime Minister also waxed very eloquent on the grandeur of the achievement which seems to furnish the necessary capital for a modern jingoistic politician to set up in his critical and oratorical trade in Parliament and outside. “It is indeed, remarkable that those regions, in which science and art are said to have first dawned upon mankind should now be subject to the rule of a people inhabiting islands which at a time when these eastern regions enjoyed as high a civilisation and as great prosperity as the age could offer, *were in a state of utter barbarism.*” (Palmerston.) But Palmerston was also alive to the responsibility. “Do not imagine that it is the intention of Providence that England should possess that vast Empire, and that we should have in our hand the destinies of that vast multitude of men, *simply that we may send out to India the sons of gentlemen or of the middle classes to make a decent fortune to live in.* That power has been entrusted to us for other and better purposes.” It might have been true during the days of Palmerston. But the world has progressed since then, and to-day, if the Conservatives are anxious to keep their control over India, it is not so much to find remunerative outlets for its needy sons, important as it is; nor with a view to retain Indian market, valuable though it be; but

with a view to lead the faltering, awkward, steps of India in the path of progress! The moral incentive which accompanied the actions of the English, particularly in their conquest, is well illustrated during the days of Dalhousie also. When the kingdom of Nagpur "was left without a claimant when the Rajah died" the British government refused "to bestow the territory in free gift upon a stranger and wisely incorporated it with its own dominions," wrote the Earl of Dalhousie on 28th February, 1856, to the Court of Directors in England. There are other incidents also before and after the days of Dalhousie which have not been brought in for want of space. Thus all along it has been the interests of India that formed the supreme and decisive consideration in the policy of the different annexations!



## CHAPTER XI

### *Defects in the moral argument—(continued)*

It is rather amusing to find some of the English historians speaking of the unapproachable superiority, intellectual and moral, of the English over the Indians during the early period of English conquest. While it is a difficult and a delicate question to be discussed at length at present, some of the incidents and facts which English writers have mentioned, and which are borne out by records, would serve to show that the creed of superiority was as much an eighteenth century delusion as a twentieth century snare. A few years before Macaulay gave his dramatic description of the conditions prevailing in Bengal, the rapacity shown by the servants of the East India Company was such that there have been very few parallels for it in Indian history during the modern period. There have been despotic kings, and despotic rulers and governors, but there have been very few instances when a community behaved almost like locusts. The conditions were so deplorable that writers like Macaulay, and later on Dr. Vincent Smith and other English historians, have been reduced to the most pitiable resources to defend the indefensible. How untenable, if not arrogant the assumption, how baseless the foundation, of a uniform attitude of unfailing English superiority in the past, the following account of Macaulay will show. Describing the conditions in Bengal in his brilliant, but distorted, essay on "Clive" he says:—"One of the

provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal." But gradually the riches of this province came to be drained away by a constant export of specie by the English merchants, and partly as a result of the policy followed by some of the administrations in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. This was but natural, since the Government in India was the managing agents for the East India Company in commercial matters. The financial interests of their masters were more or less the decisive factor in the policy of the governments in India. Lord Cornwallis, respected for his integrity by all the people in India, said in his minute on the land settlement on 10th February 1790:—"Bengal is one of the most fertile countries on the face of the globe," — and during the days of the Moghuls it was known as the "Garden of the East,"—"with a population of mild and industrious inhabitants, perhaps equal to, if not exceeding in number that of all the British possessions put together. Its real value depends upon the continuance of its ability to furnish a large annual investment to Europe, to give considerable assistance to the treasury at Calcutta, and to supply the pressing and extensive wants of the other Presidencies." This view is amply confirmed by the voluminous minutes and despatches of Wellesley, which are not reproduced here for want of space. Wellesley depended for the smooth administration of his rapidly expanding territories, for providing the large capital for trading purposes in India and in the East, and for financing the different campaigns in the various Presidencies, and even in places outside India, like Ceylon and Egypt; mainly on the revenues of Bengal. "The consequences of this heavy *drain* of

wealth from the above causes" continues Cornwallis, — though according to some of the present day writers like Capt. Ellam, this "drain is a pure myth"! — "with the addition of that which has been occasioned by the remittance of private fortunes, have been for many years past and are now, severely felt by the great diminution of the current specie, and by the languor which has thereby been thrown upon the cultivation and the general commerce of the country. A very material alteration in the principles of our system of management has therefore become indispensably necessary, in order to restore the country to a state of prosperity, and to enable it to continue to be a sole support to British interests and power in this part of the world." ("Minute on Land Settlement," 10th February, 1790). Lord Cornwallis need not be suspected of over-drawing the picture, since his belief in English pre-eminence and excellence was only equalled by his distrust of Indian ability. For a very long time in Bengal, it was neither the field, nor the owners of the field that were benefitted, but those who drove the plough-share through its bosom and made away with such gleanings as they could secure from it. That the drain from the country has not ceased, may be gathered from the weekly report of gold shipments from the country. It does not follow from this that the whole of the "distress gold" from the country has been carried away without any returns. That would be absurd. They have been made partly as a reward for the commercial and other services that India enjoyed at the hands of foreign merchants and the English administration. But making every generous allowance for such services, it remains a bitter fact, which the history of economic developments and currents

in Indian history well shows, that there has been a steady flow of the precious metals in the direction of London beyond the *normal* requirements. But these aspects of the policy of the administration do not come into the present discussion on *racial* relations. They have been brought in to show that when the English historians and politicians go into raptures over the blessings conferred on India by the English, some of them seem to forget for the time being the other side of the picture. For some of them there is only side.

To turn to the description of Bengal and the Bengalee character by Lord Macaulay. "The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature," till with the coming of the mild Englishmen like Macaulay, the overflowing bounty of nature suffered a perceptible decline, if the words of Lord Cornwallis may be trusted! "In spite of the Mussalman despot and of the Maharatha freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the Garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom." But with the gradual ascendancy of the English, "a langour . . . has been thrown upon the cultivation and the general commerce of the country." (Lord Cornwallis.) "Its population multiplied exceedingly," continues Macaulay. "Distant provinces were nourished with the overflowing of its granaries; and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms," — and the noble sons of Versailles and Westminster and Manchester raised their palatial business houses and their country mansions and parks on the wealth derived from the commerce, and in some cases, from the exploitation of the wealth, of Bengal. Then follows the most incredible part of the performance. "The race by which this rich tract was peopled, ener-

vated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to the Asiatics, *which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe,*" to the phlegmatic and superior sons of England! Why the noble lord left out a few more complimentary epithets is a matter for surprise. "The Castilians have a proverb, that in Valencia the earth is water and the men women; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plains of the Lower Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does, he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary." The gross and unfair caricature of Bengalee character, given in one of the most offensive and disgusting passages, marked by the incurably vicious tendency at exaggerating and distorting things in which this arrogant lord was an adept, follows. I would not have cared to reproduce this unfortunate piece of slander of Bengalee character, to disinter this dry bone from the grave of the past, which every fair-minded Englishman has sincerely deplored since, but for the fact that the philosophy underlying this attitude of Macaulay may be still seen among the ranks of the present day "superior" Englishmen. The intellectual testament bequeathed by Macaulay has been firmly and unquestioningly accepted by a good many of the English even now. The evil that Macaulay did has lived after him. "He shrinks from bodily exertion, and, though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in personal conflict, and scarce enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company." But the climax is reached in the next passage. "*There never perhaps existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature*

*and by habit for a foreign yoke."* It would be interesting to know the real reason for this sworn hatred and contempt for the Bengalees which Macaulay could never disguise. One has reasons to suspect that during the course of some of his private dealings, Macaulay got his fingers badly burnt, and he did not get over his feeling of irritation. Whether any of the Bengalees tweaked the superior nose of this nobleman would be an interesting thing to know! Otherwise, there is no reasonable explanation for this foul slander of Bengalee character. "Slander is a poison which extinguishes charity, both in the slanderer and in the person who listens to it; so that a single calumny may prove fatal to an infinite number of souls;" — it has actually happened so in the case of the English — "since it kills not only those who circulate it, but also all those who do not reject it," as St. Bernard said. "Those men who carry about and who listen to accusation should all be hanged, if so it could be at my decision — the carriers by their tongues, the listeners by their ears," says Plautus. Macaulay, according to this standard, deserved hanging more than once!

But there is another still more strange and comic side to this vilification of Bengalee character. It was from Bengal that this superior British aristocrat drew the means of wiping out the debt which had heavily encumbered his family estates within the surprisingly short period of four years! Still this is all that the poor country got as its reward! Such a manifestation of gratitude is not possible for the inferior Indian dogs which generally lick the hands of their masters for the favour done and not bite them in return! It would have been immensely amusing to watch, if

Macaulay were alive to-day, whether he would be prepared to maintain such a proposition. Another significant fact which may be mentioned side by side with this estimate of Bengalee character, which may be taken for what it is worth, is, that it is Bengal that has played a very prominent part in the national struggle.

Perhaps some of the readers may think that too much time and space have been devoted to the refutation of Macaulay's falsehoods. No, for this is a view which is still held by some of the English people even at present, as I shall just now prove. But it is such lies struck in Macaulay's mint and not yet withdrawn from circulation, that have been causing the greatest amount of distrust, misunderstanding, suspicion and ill-will between the two countries. The lineal descendants and inheritors of Macaulay's cursed national egotism and vanity are to be found in large numbers among the ranks of the English ruling classes. This is very well seen from the words of the Rt. Hon. Cadogan which I have quoted a few pages later. This gallant and honourable member for Parliament has even excelled Macaulay. For Macaulay, after all, was only guilty of slandering the manhood of Bengal. But this gentleman has extended the scope of his remarks to the whole of India. What is still more interesting? This, after a period of the lapse of a century since Macaulay wrote! Macaulay had at least the excuse that the blessings of British connection had not been showered on India. He was mainly responsible for opening the cultural doors of these blessings. But Mr. Cadogan is describing the conditions in India when this country has been *continuously enjoying the splendid gifts of English connections*. Nevertheless,

he says that from the whole of India he could not pick out more than a *score of Indians* who would be found competent to stand the tests of the British military academies! Since the whole quotation is reproduced later, there is no need to repeat it here. There is one fundamental difference, however, between these two remarks. Macaulay was discussing the conditions of the ordinary soldier, of the "sepoy." But Mr. Cadogan is dealing with the question of *officers*. Perhaps, when another century is over, there may be some to question the fitness of Indians for still higher commands! "O tempora! O mores!!"

Macaulay's "Essay" on "Clive" is interesting for another fact. It reveals the mentality of the ordinary Englishman when Indian conditions are being discussed. Macaulay attempted to justify the conduct of his countrymen by *maligning the character of his opponents*, which is slightly better than the procedure of Malcolm, who "was obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero." Sir John had "undertaken to defend it in all parts," observes Macaulay. ("Historical Essays," p. 591. Collins.) There seem to be serious differences in the standards of honour and integrity in the East and West! Malcolm's verdict on the conduct of Clive may be applied in general to the standards of judgment and outlook of the majority of his countrymen.

The other part of this curious procedure consists in vilifying the character of the people of India. For, some of the nasty facts of Indian history had to be somehow explained, and a few of these facts were "stubborn things." If the Indian devils were painted sufficiently black, the purity and light of the English angels could be established! The attempt of Macaulay



to explain away the conduct of Clive is one of the most ingenious and disingenuous performances one can imagine. It has to be mentioned here, because succeeding English writers have only slightly altered the methods of approach and treatment of the topic, the spirit and outlook animating all being the same. "The truth seems to have been that he (Clive) considered Oriental politics a game in which nothing was unfair," — a view which seems to be not altogether extinct even now. "He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour" — in India the name applied is not mentioned! — "with men who could give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame," as Lord Rothmere once seriously suggested about the promise of "Dominion Status" for India! — "with men who unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show the great difference between Asiatic and European morality was constantly in his thoughts." But his conduct still more eloquently revealed the fundamental difference between Indian practice and English profession! "He seems to have imagined, most erroneously in our opinion, that he could effect against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free, if he went on telling truth and hearing none, if he fulfilled to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept any engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly this man, in other parts of his life an honourable gentleman and a soldier," — some of these "gentlemen" in those days evidently lived in compartments! — "was no longer matched against an Indian intriguer, than descended, without scruple, to falsehood,

to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands," to an act which Horace would call "splendidly mendacious." Carlyle may say that "to be true is manly, chivalrous, Christian; to be false is mean, cowardly, devilish." But that is about conditions in the West. Macaulay then gives an account of the character of Ominchand. "He possessed great influence with his own race, and had, in large measure, the Hindu talents, quick observation, tact, dexterity, and perseverance; and the Hindu vices, servility, greediness, and treachery." It is extremely amusing to find "greediness" mentioned among the Hindu vices, whatever may be the truth or falsehood of the other epithets. Macaulay came to India, like other Englishmen, impelled by a "pure" love for money, by a *Platonic* affection for gold, and not with any greed! It is interesting to note that contemporary Indian opinion imputed the same vice to the English and other Europeans. In Scott's novel "Surgeon's Daughter," one of the characters says:—"A Feringi" — a common word among the Indians applied to all Europeans — "can then refuse gold. . . . I thought they took it from every hand, whether pure as that of an Houri, or leprous like Gehazi's . . . even as the hungry dog reeketh not whether the flesh he eateth be of the camel of the prophet Saleth, or of the ass of Degial, on whose head be curses." Ananda Ranga Pillai, the famous diaryist, observes while describing the character of M. Delorme: "He made no distinction between rich and poor, *never took a bribe and treated the native on a footing of equality with the European.*" ('Diary,' Vol. I, p. 26.) To continue the character sketch of Ominchund by Macaulay:—"But Clive was not a man to do anything by halves" — even when it was a crime!

"We almost blush to write it. He forged Admiral Watson's name." An offence which would have been visited with capital punishment in England and in India at that time, and which later on brought on the execution of Nundkumar during the days of Warren Hastings — this was one of the important charges against Nundkumar — however, managed to bring a "blush" in the noble lord's superior face — not a "round unthinking face" as a poet puts it. According to Mrs. Balfour, *blushes* are "the ambiguous livery worn alike by modesty and shame." It is sad to think that the serenity and attractiveness of Macaulay's face should have been disturbed by "the heart's meteors tilting in the face," as Shakespeare says of blushes. This has been frequently the story when the crimes of the English came in for treatment at the hands of their countrymen. What is still more interesting? There have been English historians who have even *defended* the conduct of Clive! "Clive, who, though little troubled by scruples of conscience," continues Macaulay, which as Sir Walter says, "the English left at the Cape and forgot to take back when they returned home," ("Surgeon's Daughter"), "in his dealings with Indian politicians was not inhuman," — he was *more than human*, — "seems to have been touched. He saw Ominchund a few days later and spoke to him kindly, advised him to take a pilgrimage to one of the greatest temples of India," — quite a charitable act of expiation, though it is not stated whether Clive offered to meet the travelling expenses and also gave a Bible to read during the journey! — "in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, to employ him in public service." How far the mock-

ing spectre of this and similar transactions haunted Clive later, whether like Macbeth he exclaimed "will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand," or as in the case of Richard III said:—

"Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree

All several sins, all us'd in each degree

Throng to the bar, crying all "guilty! guilty!",

it is not possible to say. According to Dr. Johnson, "it was a consciousness of his crimes, that impelled Clive to cut his own throat." Anyway, to the last he considered his conduct consistent with the conduct of a *gentleman*! Well, there are strange gentlemen during every age, and there are stranger *gentlemen* who defend such actions! The judgment passed on the conduct of Clive by some of the English writers is a significant commentary on the *superior* morality of some of the English, and of the way in which prejudices and passions come to warp the judgment of their compatriots. Of course a good many of the English have expressed their horror of this and similar acts. But when sober and learned historians attempt to defend the conduct of their kinsmen, the sophistry used in the process generally escapes their own observation. Yet Macaulay had the presumption to say in the face of these and other similar incidents, which did not attain the same prominence, that "English valour, and English intelligence have done less to extend and preserve our Oriental Empire than *English veracity*. Of the first two there is no complaint. But when English veracity is held up as the model for India, — and I can set down a few other similar instances — there is naturally a smile of amusement among some of the Indians who happen to know the details of these transactions. "All we have gained by imitating

the doublings,"—so Macaulay confesses to his countrymen having practised some!—"the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries which have been employed against us, is as nothing, when compared with what we have gained by being the only power in India on whose words reliance can be placed." ("Essays of Macaulay," p. 431. Edited by F. C. Montague, 1903.) The history of India shows the fate of a good many of the Native States who have gained by placing their *reliance* on the words of the English East India Company! Macaulay tries to defend, to exonerate the conduct of his countrymen in India, by pleading the poor standard of morality which prevailed here at that time. Justifications, palliations, excuses, will never be lacking. The trouble comes when these are urged in favour of the conduct of only *one* party. "What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptations such that as Clive said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, distracted, turbulent, ill-informed Company, situated at such a distance that the average interval for the sending of a despatch and the receipt of an answer was above a year and half. Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to such a point as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of cameleopards; the Spanish viceroy, who leaving behind him the curse of Mexico

and Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone." "*Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the Company,*" nor does this seem to be a weakness, whether properly or improperly called, among the modern English residents. "But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to be rich," during the eighteenth century; and *cruelty itself could not produce half the irritation* which the grim determination of the English residents to remain at a good racial distance, removed from all vitiating contact with the Indian, *creates at present.*

Later on in the course of the "Essay" Macaulay is compelled to apologise for the enormities committed by his countrymen in India. "The servants of the Company obtained not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear, and to sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, the fiscal authorities of the country. . . . Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of John Company thicker than the loins of Suraj Dawlah." It has not been infrequently the same in some respects, particularly in the *racial*. The Indians have found the racial finger of the English as heavy, and in many cases equally irritating, as the weight of the other fingers they have been compelled to bear up till now. "Under their old masters they had at least

one resource: when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilisation. It resembled the government of evil Genii, rather than the government of human tyrants." (Macaulay's "Historical Essays", p. 609.)

The words that Macaulay quoted from the writings of an Indian historian (Mohammedan), would be of interest to the present day readers. "It must be acknowledged," says the Mussulman historian of those times, "that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array and fighting in order. *If to so many military qualifications they exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs,*" and it may be also added, in their social enjoyments — "*no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or worthier of command. But the people under their dominion groan everywhere, and are reduced to poverty and distress. O God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions which they suffer.*" ("Historical Essays." Lord Macaulay, p. 610.) To what extent the words expressed by the Mohammedan historian about the conditions which prevailed during the last part of the eighteenth century, is true of subsequent periods, is outside the scope of this work.

The conditions in Bengal were so deplorable that Clive wrote home: "Alas! how is the English name

sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation — irrecoverably so, I fear." (P. 612.) In his "Essay on Warren Hastings," Macaulay alludes to the corruption which prevailed among the ranks of the English government then. "Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. "*The master caste*," as was natural, broke loose from all restraint." It is very interesting to see that Macaulay had already applied the term "*Brahmin*" to the English residents in India. Even during the later part of the eighteenth century, India had witnessed the emergence of a new caste in this fertile land of castes! With the Hun Invasion, the Rajputs were added to the Indian system. With the ascendancy of the English in Bengal, India found another layer deposited on the Indian social strata. "To all other despotisms there is a check, imperfect indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance," whether it has come now, it would be interesting to hear the opinion of the English themselves — "when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class made their power irresistible." ("Essays," p. 647.)

Describing the character of a "Hindoo Brahmin," Nundkumar, which Macaulay represents as typical of Bengalee and of Indian character, he has the following very *just* and *charitable* remarks:—"Of his moral



character it is difficult to give a notion to those who are acquainted with human nature as it appears in *our island*." (P. 655.) Of course, from the dawn of Creation till the present time it has always appeared in that "*island*" only at its very best, as can be seen from a perusal of English history! "What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nundkumar to other Bengalees. The physical organisation of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy." "He lives in constant vapour bath." It would be interesting to read of the conditions during the eighteenth century when a good many of the English factors lived sometimes in a vapour bath of intoxication, at least during some part of the day, at the different settlements in Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta. "His pursuits are sedentary," continues Macaulay, "his limbs delicate, his movements languid," unlike the steady, military gait of people like Macaulay! "During many ages he has been trampled upon by men of bolder and hardier breed," — the pressure of the stamping varying in direct ratio to the boldness and hardihood of the conquerors! "Courage, independence, veracity are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavourable," whereas they are the very element in which the European nations move and have their being, both in Europe and in Asia! "His mind bears a singular analogy to his body. It is weak even to helplessness, for purposes of manly resistance; but its suppleness and its tact move the children of sterner climates" — nobler virtues, hardier frames, finer instincts, superior intellects, — why Macaulay omitted such qualities also is rather strange! — "to admiration not unmingled with

contempt." How admiration and contempt are generated at the same time is a psychological puzzle to the Indians. Of course to the versatile English people, like Macaulay, it is quite easy. "All those arts which are natural to the defence of the weak are more familiar to the subtle race than to the Ionian of the time of Juvenal, or to the Jew of the dark ages. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty according to the old Greek song, is to woman," and one may also add, — what truth is to Macaulay and other Englishmen of his type — "deceit is to the Bengalee." "Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges. Macaulay evidently forgot that the use of the weapons of offense and defense depends on the nature of the weapons of offense forged and used by the opposite party. "All those millions do not furnish one sepoy to the armies of the Company." A very convincing proof of their cowardice! "But as usurers, as money-changers, as sharp legal practitioners, no class of human being can bear a comparison with them. With all his softness, the Bengalee is by no means placable in his enmities or prone to pity. The pertinacity with which he adheres to his purposes yields only to the immediate pressure of fear. Nor does he lack a certain kind of courage *which is often wanting in his masters*. To inevitable evils he is sometimes found to oppose a passive fortitude, such as Stoics attributed to their ideal sage. An European warrior who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at

the sentence of death. But the Bengalee who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonoured, without having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sidney." (Warren Hastings: "Historical Essays," pp. 655-66.)

It is interesting to follow the line of argument adopted by this ingenious writer in his sophistical writings. He places the same riddle in the character of the Indian which Ruskin presented to the English readers when describing Indian character after the Great Mutiny. The Bengalees, and other Indians, possess "a certain kind of courage which is often wanting in his masters." "His masters" may rush "on a battery of cannon" under the delirium of war, under the intoxication of diseased patriotism, which kills and burns one's neighbours with a courage truly admirable in Christian nations! But "his masters will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at the sentence of death." Now which is the more commendable type? That which whines under physical suffering, but rushes to the mouth of a cannon, or that which is reluctant to go to war and to kill or maim his neighbour to inflict a wound on his neighbour, but stands all the personal physical discomforts unmoved? What does Christ commend? What does Macaulay hold up for admiration? It has been not unlike this when it comes to a comparison of Indian and English virtues, and Eastern and Western morality. I am not praising Indian character or the virtues of the Indians, and showing that these are superior to the virtues of

the English and of other western nations. No. That would be a very misleading and erroneous procedure. For one thing no one — unless blinded by national vanity and intellectual presumption — can hope to describe the characteristics of a whole nation in a few sentences. Nor would such a picture be true to the original, unless one happened to know intimately the conditions of which he was speaking. The amount of knowledge Macaulay and also many of his countrymen had, is very well known. Now, it is necessary to explode this myth of superiority based on wrong foundations. The whole thing is built on the strong basis of ignorance and national prejudices. No amount of reasoning is likely to convince some of the English, in spite of their *culture* and fair-mindedness, of the dishonesty of the procedure adopted by people like Macaulay. Yet Macaulay is one of the most popular writers whose works the English read with great interest. Whether one of the reasons for this popularity — besides his attractive style — is that he flatters the national vanity to the highest extent, it would be useful to know. Naturally he must be very popular. His writings contain some of the most grotesque caricature of Indian conditions. The love of the English for this stuff is certainly significant in more ways than one!

How Macaulay contradicts himself on many occasions, at one time painting the conduct of his countrymen all in white, but at other times mixing also a few grey tints; and how he depicts the character of the Indian inhabitants all in dark, adding now and then a few grey touches, and how he manages to reconcile the whole for the admiration of his countrymen, these are very amusing things to watch. If a

picture were painted on this model and presented in an exhibition, the judges would not even care to look into it while considering the merits of the exhibits. But a good many of the English people have assigned the first place to the literary artist who has been indulging in the same methods in his intellectual painting. One cannot but admire the tastes of some of the English literary judges also!

Perhaps it may be asked why so much time and space have been given to the *criticism of Macaulay's opinions*. The reasons are obvious. The opinions held and expressed by Macaulay are still very widely found among the English at present. Their information and inspiration are obtained from the pages of Macaulay. The intellectual descendants of Macaulay — a very curious variety, fit to be kept in some of the museums — are still found in large numbers and the species are not yet extinct! Further, there are modern politicians among the Conservatives who have *applied the scope of Macaulay's remarks to the whole of India!*

"During this period the business of the servant of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible," — and the engine used to be applied with thoroughness in most cases — "that he might return home, before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, to buy rotten boroughs," from the ill-gotten riches — "in Cornwall and to give balls in May Fair" ("Warren Hastings," *Essays of Macaulay*, Vol. III, p. 299. Ed. by F. C. Montague.) "There remains proof that he (Clive) had remitted more than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds through the Dutch East India Com-

pany, and more than forty thousand pounds through the English Company. The amount which he sent home through private houses was also considerable. He had invested great sums in jewels, then a very common mode of remittance from India. His purchases of diamonds, at Madras alone, amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Besides a great mass of ready money, he had his Indian estate valued by himself at twenty thousand a year." ("Lord Clive," Historical Essays, pp. 603-4.) This process of sending money begun long before by Clive is however not yet over. Yet to some of the modern English writers and politicians "the drain of money from India is a pure myth," and India stands to lose more by the weakening of the Imperial bonds!

After describing the situation in Bengal, Macaulay gives the account of Bengalee character, which is one of the vilest performances any "gentleman" can indulge in. "Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to *confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind*, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of ten-fold odds." Even the English editor of the "Essays" admits that the expression was "unfortunate." It was not merely "unfortunate," but it was stupid and utterly *false*, and I am quite prepared to prove it. Having gone through the records of the period relevant to this context, this tissue of absurdities and lies can be easily exposed. It was a "white lie, perhaps not deliberately stated, it may be said, in charity to the memory of the ignorant and presumptuous Lord. He was guilty of sacrificing truth to rhetorical effect. But unfortunately, like the "Dragon's teeth" in the Greek fables, it has produced a vicious brood.

The reader will kindly pardon the attempt that is being made to refute this mischievous statement by bringing in other facts to disprove it. For there are a good many English people who accept the words of Macaulay as gospel truth, and also those who accept the *general outlines of the picture as correct*. Both are mistaken. Unless this historical myth is exploded it is impossible to establish the shallowness of the claim to superiority in most cases which has prevented a friendly understanding between the English people and Indians. It has been stated that the books most commonly read among the English-speaking countries of the world, are the works of Macaulay, Shakespeare, and the Bible. Consequently, the mischievous effects of his false statements have been more widely disseminated, and the germs of this fallacy more extensively spread.

Macaulay was guilty not merely of gross exaggeration when he made that and similar statements, but he was either uttering a lie, or he did not know what exactly he was prattling about. In charity, it is better to accept the latter alternative. "There is no greater sin than to be *"trop prononcé,"*" observed Lord Beaconsfield. Macaulay, among the English writers, was one of the greatest offenders in this respect, and Macaulay is also generally a favourite with the English reading public! From the contemporary records it is obvious that the kind of recruits which the East India Company secured for its service at this time were hardly such as to warrant this silly and stupid expression, the "hereditary nobility of mankind." Macaulay was evidently depending on his imagination for his facts. The troops of the East India Company were generally drawn from the very lowest strata of Eng-

lish society. The reasons are obvious. First of all, those who wanted a career in the army joined the home battalions. Very few among the English soldiers were enamoured of an Indian career. Of course there were a few irrepressible hot-bloods like Clive who tried their fortune in a distant country because they found their country too "hot" for them. Secondly, even if they had exhausted the possibilities of the home forces, the next preference was for the *King's regiments* serving in the East, in India, in the Spice Islands or other Eastern lands. So those who were keen on a military career in the East tried to get into these ranks. Consequently, the Company had to be satisfied with the services of all those who had failed to get through the other sieves. Professor Dodwell in his authoritative and excellent work "Dupleix and Clive" alludes to the fact, that during the middle of the 18th century, when the English and the French were engaged in a bitter fight for supremacy in the southern part of the peninsula, deciding as to who should wield the sceptre of power over India, the East India Company, hard pressed for recruits, eagerly accepted the services of *every kind of people who volunteered, of people like convicts and other jail birds* who were released on the one condition that they should join the ranks of the East India Company's troops! When news reached England of the commencement of hostilities between the English and the French in India in the year 1746, the Directors of the Company appealed to the Government for help. ("Petition of the Secret Committee to Newcastle, 24th April, 1747," Public Records Office, Colonial.) The authorities ordered the despatch of six ships provided with English "malt spirits," — an indispensable equipment for every



voyage to the East. Without an adequate supply of a "sinful quantity" of liquor, as one of the Elizabethan writers, Richard Hakluyt says, no journey was considered complete. At the same time it was decided to raise twelve independent companies — that is, not organised into regular battalions — from Scotland and from Ireland. Why England was left out is not clear. Perhaps the recruiting pastures had been exhausted by raising supplies for the wars on the continent of Europe. But the campaigns in Scotland did not prove a success, whether it was that the people there were unfamiliar with Indian conditions, or that they were too familiar with them as to relish them very much—even though the recruiting agents were promised extremely attractive terms by the authorities, — it is not easy to decide. The East India Company was thus forced to accept the services of *rebels, deserters, highwaymen pardoned on condition of enlistment in the army; with the numerous body of "true patriots"* who left their country for their country's good, and came to India for India's good! The horrors of recruiting, and the devilish tactics of the recruiting agents which can be gathered from the literature of the period, are brought in by Sir W. Scott in all their revolting details in his novel "Surgeon's Daughter." Contemporary books and records show that the novelist has not erred on the side of exaggeration.

Sir Walter, who reproduced with such amazing fidelity the conditions which prevailed during the days of the Crusades in his "Talisman" and "Ivanhoe," who describes the French panoramic history of the days of Louis the Eleventh, otherwise known as the "Universal Spider", in "Quentin Durward," who wrote of the exciting days of the "Virgin Queen" in "Heart

of Middlothian," of the period of James I, in "The Fortunes of Nigel," and dealt with the historical incidents of Charles I, and of the Commonwealth period in his novels in a very artistic and accurate manner, was not likely to go wrong in his treatment of the conditions in India during the period of which he was writing. Further, he had also a few good friends besides his son who had been in India, who were in an admirable position to furnish him with the information he required. So one can more or less accept as correct the picture he painted.

Captain Hillary, one of the characters in the novel, "Surgeon's Daughter," is on a recruiting campaign in Scotland. He gives a preliminary warning to the prospective candidates desirous of going to India to keep silence over their destination. "One promise he extracted from Middlemas. . . . . It was absolute silence on the subject of his destination for India" . . . . . "My recruits," said the Captain, "have been all marched off the depôt at the Isle of Wight," which was a regular Pandemonium such as mentioned by Milton. "Dick promised secrecy, and it was agreed that the two friends should not leave the borough in company, but that the Captain should set off first, and his recruit should join him at Edinburgh where his enlistment might be attested."

The places from where the Company managed to gather recruits would furnish the most eloquent testimony of the superior stuff of which they were made! "Hillary's services are too necessary in the purlieus of St. Giles's, the Lowlights of Newcastle, and such like *places where human carrion can be picked up to be permitted to go to India.*" Yet such are the "lords of creation," the "hereditary nobility of mankind"

which Macaulay's disordered imagination saw in the tropics! It has been, at times, the same story with the other writers and observers who have commented upon the unexampled superiority of the English race and its exceptional standards!

About the normal life of these "hereditary nobility of mankind," Scott gives a few touches as they lay huddled together at the Isle of Wight waiting for the boat that would take them to India. Describing the groans and sighs of the strange company by which Richard Middlemas, the villain of the story, found himself surrounded, Scott says:—"They came from the ranges of pallet-beds, which were closely packed together in a species of military hospital where a burning fever was the prevalent complaint. Many of the patients were under the influence of a high delirium during which they shouted, shrieked, laughed, blasphemed, and uttered the most horrible imprecations. Others sensible of their condition bewailed it with low groans, and some attempts at devotion, which showed them ignorant of the principles and even the forms of religion. Those who were convalescent talked ribaldry in a loud tone, or whispered to each other in cant language" (pp. 379-380, "Surgeon's Daughter.")

"Richard Middlemas's astonishment was equal to his horror. He had but one advantage over the poor wretches with whom he was classed, and it was in enjoying the luxury of a pallet to himself — most of the others being occupied by two unhappy beings. He saw no one who appeared to attend to the wants or to heed to the complaints of the wretches around him, or to whom he could offer any appeal against his present situation. . . . . The bed nearest to him was occupied by two fellows, who, although to judge from

their gaunt cheeks, hollow eyes and ghastly looks, they were apparently recovering from the disease, and just rescued from the jaws of death, were deeply engaged in endeavouring to cheat each other of a few half pence at a game of cribbage, mixing the terms of the game with oaths not loud but deep. . . . . Next to the gamblers was a pallet, occupied indeed by two bodies, but only one of which was living — the other sufferer had been recently relieved from his agony. "He is dead — he is dead!" said the wretched survivor. "Then do you die too, and be d—d," answered one of the players, "and then there will be a pair of you as Pugg says." "I tell you he is growing stiff cold," said the poor wretch — "the dead is no bed fellow for the living. For God's sake help to rid me of this corpse". . . . . "Such another word and I will twist your head round till your eyes look at the drummer's handwriting on your back. Hold your peace, and don't bother our game with your gammon, or I will make you as mute as your bed-fellow." The brutal indifference and the cruelty and the savage ferocity of that asylum, — it was really a menagerie — are portrayed with grim vividness by the novelist. The "Governor of the Hospital," a man named Captain Seelencoop, was a "stout, short, bandy-legged man, with one eye, and a double portion of ferocity in that which remained." "The principal depôt of the troops which were by these means assembled, was in the Isle of Wight, where the season proving unhealthy and the men themselves being many of them of a bad habit of body, a fever of a malignant character broke out amongst them, and speedily crowded with patients the military hospital of which Mr. Seelencoop, himself an old experienced crump and kidnapper, had

obtained the superintendence. Irregularities began to take place among the soldiers who remained healthy." (Sir W. Scott, "Surgeon's Daughter," pp. 390-1. Collin's Edition.) Such was the temporary habitation, the nature of the life, and the character of the ordinary recruits in England, before they fully fledged out into the "hereditary nobility of mankind" in India! "Exaggeration is blood relation to falsehood and nearly as blameable," says Hosea Ballou, and the remark is quite apt in the case of Macaulay. The "Memoirs" of William Hickey gives us some very interesting accounts of the process of enlistment in the service of the East India Company, the types of recruits obtained, the terms of the service, etc. Lack of space prevents one from reproducing the statements made there. But the conclusion, that the kind of recruits who joined the ranks of the East India Company's service, was never such as to justify the extravagant, false, and misleading statements made by Macaulay, is clear and unavoidable. Macaulay's "Essay" on Clive is from the logical side — from the literary it would delight all — a curious performance. At one time Macaulay blames the English for their oppressions and for their high-handed actions. At one time he finds fault with the people of India. Then he praises the British character, and a few lines later he decries it. Referring to the nature of the struggle that was going on in Bengal, Macaulay says:—"Then was seen what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles, the strength of civilisation without its mercy. To all other despotisms there is a check, imperfect indeed, and liable to gross abuse; but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission

are obviously greater than those of resistance, when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal, it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class," it was their physical force and the help given by their armaments that placed the English in their superior position — "made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves," says Macaulay. But if the Bengalee sheep had a few guns with them the story would have been different!

Sheridan was not indulging in any hyperbole when he gave the following description of the conditions which prevailed in Bengal at this time. "It had been said of the Company that there was something in their operations which combined the meanness of the pedlar with the profligacy of a pirate. Alike in the military and political line could be observed auctioneering ambassadors and trading generals; and thus we saw a revolution brought about by affidavits, an army employed in executing an arrest, a town besieged on a note of hand, a prince dethroned for the balance of an account. Thus it was they united the mock majesty of a bloody sceptre and the little traffic of a merchant's counting house, wielding a truncheon with one hand, and picking a pocket with the other." ("Speech on the Beegums of Oudh," 7th February, 1787. "Parliamentary History," Vol. XXV, Col. 287.) "Fraud, injustice, oppression, speculation, engendered in India, are crimes of the same brood, family, caste with those that are bred in England," said Mr. Burke in his "Impeachment of Warren Hastings." But ac-

according to some of the other English historians and politicians there is a fundamental difference in the moral texture of the people of the two countries. The crime of the Indian is of a more darksome dye, evidently in proportion to the colour of his skin, dark in direct ratio to his outer pigment! "All the walks of literature are infested with mendicants for fame, who attempt to excite our interest by exhibiting all the distortion of their intellects and stripping the covering from all the putrid sores of their feelings," wrote Macaulay once, sublimely unconscious of the terrible irony implied in that, for it was what Macaulay was guilty of while writing on Indian conditions. "I wish I was as sure of anything as Macaulay was of everything," remarked Mr. Wyndham, one of the leading politicians during the early part of the nineteenth century. The calumnies started by Macaulay have been readily accepted by not a few of the subsequent generations of Englishmen. "Calumny is a monstrous vice," said Herodotus, and it is equally applicable to the performance of Macaulay.

The following instructions issued to the servants of the East India Company during the early period may be of some interest to the modern readers. "Principally, above all things, you are to endeavour with the best of your might and power the advancement of the glory of God, which you will best do by walking holily, righteously, prudently, and Christianly in this present world, that so, you may enjoy the quiet and peace of good conscience towards God and man." ("Hedges Diary," Vol. III, p. 184.) While they were thus admonished to walk in the straight and narrow way in the tropics, they were also expected not to neglect their business and trade in the excessive enthusiasm to obey

the orders of their distant masters! For immediately after, they are exhorted to buy in the cheapest market a cargo of Bengal sugars and peter (salt petre,) "to inquire secretly into the business methods of the Dutch and above all to procure the license for trade which may outstrip the Dutch in point of privilege and freedom." Thus they were to be, like the Apostles of old, as "wise as serpents and as innocent as doves." How far these and similar pious words of advice with which the early records are often interspersed, were followed by their servants in the East, is a matter of historical knowledge. Macaulay was apparently struck by the wisdom and moderation of his countrymen in the East!

One has said enough of the contributions made by Macaulay to this citadel of racial eminence. His share was great, compelling, many-sided, mischievous, and deplorable. By his popular writings he served to scatter widely the seeds of arrogance, and the crop gathered after his death has been marked by variety and exuberance. It is being garnered even now. The following epitaph was once written of one of the nobles in England during the early Norman period of English History:

"Here lies William Marshall;  
We thank thee Hell,  
For taking such a rascal  
From us."

Similarly in the case of Lord Macaulay, one may be permitted to write the following lines, besides the already existing ones in "storied urn, or animated bust," commemorating his achievements:

"Here lies Lord Macaulay,  
A superior English polly,  
Who spoke or wrote no folly  
Nor anything that's drolly."



Perhaps some of the readers may be inclined to think that I have been making too much of the evidence of a novelist — (Sir W. Scott), in this matter, reminding me of a question which is once supposed to have been put by a witness in court who objected to a reference to "The Merchant of Venice." "What has an Innis merchant to do with the case?" he asked in irritation when the instance of Shylock was cited by the advocate to prove a particular point! Sir Walter had plenty of chances of knowing the Indian conditions. His observations, therefore, on the nature of the recruits that came to India cannot be summarily dismissed as the evidence of an ignorant novelist. He had met Reginald Heber at the University, and was a friend of his brother Richard. Reginald Heber is well known to the people of South India. Scott was also a good friend of Mr. Pinkerton, the great traveller and historian, whose accounts of his travels in the East renewed and enlarged the field of European knowledge about the Orient. Scott's brother-in-law, Charles Carpenter, made his fortune in India, and must have rendered all help to the novelist during his financial difficulties. His eldest son proceeded to Madras in 1839 as an Officer in the "Hussars." But "Sir Walter having unwisely exposed himself in a tiger hunt in August 1846, was on his return to his quarters in Bangalore, smitten with a fever, which ended in liver disease. He was ordered to proceed to England, and died near the Cape of Good Hope on board the ship 'Wellesley,' 8th February, 1847." (Lockhart: "Life of Scott".) Sir Walter was very near sending his second son, Charles, to India in the service of the East India Company, if the information given by Lockhart may be trusted. It is a matter for

satisfaction to the people of India, that her wealth was put to one good use; and that during the difficulties of this great writer, it was the money obtained from India by his friends that helped him out of the situation. Thus besides sending up the price of rotten boroughs in England, the money from India was at least once put to a good use. It is also gratifying to note that there are some very intimate and touching, personal and family relations, between India and some of the great masters of English literature. Everyone knows the connections of Thackeray. The history of Leyden's connections are also mentioned in this same book. John Milton, Mathew Arnold, Thomas Moore, had some kind of family interests in India. There are also other instances where the connections were not so intimate.

Sir Walter had admirable chances for knowing Indian conditions. He was an intimate friend of John Leyden, who collaborated with him in the "Minstrelsy of Scottish Border." Leyden sailed for Madras in 1802, after qualifying himself as a doctor in the service of the East India Company. The touching tribute that Scott paid to the memory of this noble soul does not err on the side of exaggeration. "To this exception from cupidity was allied every generous virtue worthy of those smiles of fortune, which he disdained to court, and among many estimable features of his character, an ardent love of justice, and vehement abhorrence of oppression, were not less prominent than the other high qualities I have already described." ("Biographies," p. 194.) Sir John Malcolm celebrated the memory of Leyden in a few noble stanzas from which one may be reproduced.

"Yes, he who struck a matchless lyre  
O'er Flodden field, and Katrine's wave,  
With trembling hand now leads the choir  
That mourn his Leyden's early grave."

(Scott: "Miscellaneous Works," p. 187).

Very few people would be disposed to call in question the ability of Leyden to pronounce an opinion on the merits of Indian culture; and if the subsequent critics had possessed but half the knowledge and genius of Leyden, their opinions would have been entirely different. "The languages that have attracted my attention," he wrote home since his arrival in India, "have been Arabic, Persic, Telinga, Canara, Sanscrit, Malayalam, Malay and Armenian. . . . . What would you say were I to add the Maldivian and Mapella languages to these? Besides I have deciphered the inscriptions of Mavalipoorani" — Mahabalipuram, near Madras — "which was written in ancient Canarese character, which had hitherto defied all attempts of understanding it, and also several "Lada Lippi," inscriptions which are an ancient Tamil dialect and character, in addition to the Jewish tablets at Cochin. . . . ." (Scott: "Miscellaneous Works," p. 184.) These facts have been brought in to show that there were intellectual giants walking in India at the time when pigmies, or rather clowns, like Macaulay were also strutting on the Indian cultural stage.

The peculiar and interesting circumstances under which John Leyden came to visit India are mentioned by Scott. One of the conditions of the appointment by the East India Company was that the candidate should be a medical graduate of one of the Scottish or English Universities. Leyden did not fulfil that condition when the application was made. But within the course

of 6 months he finished the whole course creditably and John Leyden M.D. was "proforma" nominated to Madras Hospital." (Scott: "Miscellaneous Works," Vol. IV, p. 172, 1870.) "And thus set forth on his voyage, perhaps the first British traveller," — and with a very few exceptions the last one also, — "that ever sought India, moved neither by the love of wealth," rather a strange thing for a Scot! — "nor of power, and who, despising alike the luxuries commanded by the one, and the pomp attached to other, was guided solely by the wish of extending our knowledge of Oriental literature, and distinguishing himself as its most successful cultivator." (Scott. "Miscellaneous Works," p. 177.) What a contrast to Macaulay in every respect. Want of space prevents one from dealing with the varied activities of this Scotch genius during his Indian career. His account of the conditions of life at Madras throws interesting light on the social life and outlook there. "When I arrived in Madras," wrote Mr. Leyden to Mr. Ballantyne, on 24th October, 1805, "I first of all reconnoitred my ground, when I perceived that the public fell naturally into two divisions. The mercantile party consisting chiefly of men of old standing, versed in trade, and inspired with a spirit in no respect superior to that of the most pettifogging pedler, nor in their views a whit more enlarged; in short, men whose *sole occupation is to make money* and who have no name for such phrases as national honour, public spirit or patriotism, men in short, who would sell their honour or their country's credit to the highest bidder, without a shadow of scruple. What is more unfortunate, this is the party that stands highest in credit with the East India Company." Perhaps the "hereditary nobility

of mankind" whom Macaulay saw in Bengal had become extinct as a species in the south! Of the evidence of the two writers every one knows which is more reliable. "There is another party," says Leyden, "for whom I am at a loss to find an epithet. They cannot with propriety be termed the anti-mercantile party, as they have the interest of our national commerce more at heart than the other; but they have discovered that we are not merely merchants in India, but legislators and governors; and they assert that our conduct there ought to be calculated for stability and security, and equally marked by a wise administration of justice, financial and political economy, and by a vigilant, firm, and steady system of external politics. I fancy this division applies as much to Bombay and Bengal as to Madras." (Sir Walter Scott: "Biographies," Vol. II, p. 183. Adam and Charles Black, Edinburgh, 1870.)

Leyden's interest in Indian affairs may be seen from the following words: "No! I certainly shall never repent of having come to India. It has awakened energies in me that I scarcely imagined I possessed, though I could gnaw my living nails with pure vexation to think how much I have been thwarted by indisposition." In everyone, the stay in India seems to awaken some sort of *energy*. In the case of a good many it seems to stir up the *racial energy* in an irrepressible manner. In Macaulay it stirred up his critical and vituperative energy. In some others it creates a passion for oaths! Leyden's remark about the Indian climate would be echoed by all. "It is not every constitution that can resist the combined attack of liver, spleen, bloody flux, and jungle fever, which is very much akin to the plague of Egypt and the yellow fever of America." A similar variety of "yellow fever"

seems to have brought on later an attack of jaundice in the case of a good many of the Englishmen like Macaulay in India. "It is true I have been five times given up by the most skilful physicians." (PP. 184-85.) Leyden spent "all his money in buying oriental works and manuscripts." His countrymen must have thought him evidently crazy to throw away his money like that instead of calculating and saving it as Macaulay did. His example has very seldom been followed by any Scotchman and by very few Englishmen since. He devoted all his spare time in the cultivation of Oriental literature. "I may die in the attempt, but if I die without surpassing Sir W. Jones a hundredfold, let never a tear for me profane the eye of a Borderer." (P. 193.) Yet to Macaulay and fraternity, all the volumes in the Orient were not to be compared with one shelf of books in the Occident! Perhaps it may be objected that it is not possible for every Englishman or Scotchman to be a Leyden, and that it is unfair to judge them with the standards of Sir William Jones and Leyden. Perfectly true. But then they should not judge Indian conditions and Indian literature and learning according to the standards set up by Macaulay! One more among the many and interesting experiences of this versatile genius may be mentioned. On one occasion, Sir John Malcolm, the great civilian and scholar, — in India there were some administrative and intellectual giants during the beginning of the nineteenth century — asked Leyden to improve his English if he wanted to get acquainted with people in "high circles" in India. "Learn a little English and be silent except among literary men," said Malcolm. "Learn English," Leyden exclaimed, "no, never! it was while trying to learn that language that

spoilt my Scotch; and as to being silent, I will promise to hold my tongue, if you will make fools hold theirs," came the sarcastic reply. (Sir Walter Scott: "Memoirs," p. 190.)

But when the English people had to choose between the opinions of Macaulay on the one hand; and Leyden, Sir William Jones, Sir John Malcolm, and Elphinstone on the other, they have generally preferred those of Macaulay. The reason is obvious. Those satisfied their national vanity. It is not merely Macaulay's opinions that bring down the scale. But they throw their heavy weight of prejudices also in it. The result is natural. The process is however really amusing. On the one hand we have a few eminent scholars who studied Oriental literature to the extent that is humanly possible for any one. Sir William Jones knew at least a score of languages, more than half of them being Oriental ones. Leyden knew more than a dozen, the larger part among them being Indian. Macaulay did not know a single Indian language. Yet the English people prefer to follow the opinion of Macaulay, to apply his conclusions to Indian culture. The *tragedy* of it is, that the English are hardly aware of the cultural *comedy* in which they are the chief actors. Yet it is this ignorant and shallow estimate of Indian culture that has been mainly responsible for the contempt with which India and her culture and her inhabitants have been treated by the Englishman, who is utterly ignorant of, or indifferent to, the beauties of her learning. I know what men will say of me, "He died learning," said J. R. Green, the great historian. Of Macaulay it may be said, that he lived maligning Indian culture! Thus as long as this attractive tissue of absurdities continues to be cherished

as a national possession and handed down from generation to generation, the English will undoubtedly believe in the historical myth. Very few Englishmen—either those who come to India or those that remain at home—would have failed to make use of the cultural over-coat fashioned by Macaulay. It is high time that this false intellectual testament should be replaced by a more decent and correct one. The English people of the present generation have been drinking of this milk of superior culture, and thus one finds the deep and fundamental and inviolate faith in the superiority of English culture. This has been in no small measure responsible for the arrant and ignorant attitude of a good many among the English in India.

Even at present, historians like the late Dr. Vincent Smith, have adopted the same pitiable subterfuge, the same imperial casuistry, in defending the conduct of their countrymen in India. This shows that the same attitude still prevails. "The inherent difficulties of the situation in which the officials of the Company found themselves placed were enormous, and could not have been wholly overcome if every Englishman in Bengal had been an angel of light," says Dr. Vincent Smith. But when the majority of the people were just the opposite during that period, the difficulties were bound to increase. "The Indian government with which the British had to deal were thoroughly debased," and the Englishmen confounded the confusion by applying to them the high principles of English morality! "Treachery and murder of the most atrocious kinds were almost universally recognised as ordinary methods of state-craft. English officials who had to transact business with the Indian public men of the



eighteenth century could hardly help from suffering a certain amount of moral deterioration or from yielding to the temptation of meeting guile by guile. The court of Delhi was hopelessly vicious and corrupt . . . . . The ministers were utterly unscrupulous, and nobody pretended to entertain patriotic sentiments. The minor courts, as a rule, were no better; and it would be difficult to name an *honest* man among the prominent notables of the time, whether in the north or in the south." (Vincent Smith: "Oxford History of India," p. 498.) But English historians who have taken upon themselves the duty of dressing up and enamelling the deeds of their countrymen in India for the gaze of the people here and in England, would probably, not find a single name which was *dishonest*, among the English, with the exception of Clive! Clive's conduct is too well known to be glossed over. "Nearly all the notable men of that age lived vicious lives, stained by gross sensuality, ruthless cruelty, and insatiable greed," says Vincent Smith in a pathetic attempt to defend and exonerate the conduct of his countrymen. It would have reflected greater credit on the reputation for scholarship and honesty of these people if they had frankly acknowledged the defects in the conduct of the English in India during this period, instead of throwing the whole responsibility on the people of India. Amidst this hopeless desert of corruption, degradation, treachery, and immorality among the Indian statesmen, the English inhabitants, according to such writers, remained pure and unsullied in their oasis of superior morality, often floating in an atmosphere of beer and whisky or "country arrack"! The temptation to justify the conduct of one's friends and countrymen by blackening,

and maligning the character of opponents, is a method older than adopted by English historians and may be said as old as our first ancestor Adam. It is this pharisaical attitude, this tendency to see always and easily the mote in the Indian's eye, forgetful of the beam in the English eye, that has been chiefly responsible in strengthening the *moral foundations* of the building of racial superiority. When all the facts of the case in Bengal and other places are taken into consideration while forming one's conclusions, there is very little to choose between the standard of Chanakya — a reputed and unscrupulous minister of one of the early Hindu kings — and that of the English followers of Machiavelli. The game was played fairly evenly by the two parties from the beginning, though in the end the western players ran off victorious from the field. Under the circumstances to hear of the superior morality of the west is highly diverting. The people using some of the terms are not fully conscious of their meaning.

"The justice and moderation" of the English conduct and principles may be found on almost every page of the copious "Despatches" of Lord Wellesley. If there is one unbroken thread running through all the parts of the five elaborate volumes of Wellesley's "Despatches," it is about the *moderation, the justice, the restraint of English conduct on the one hand*, and of the caprice, the treachery, the ingratitude, and baseness of the Indian States which refused obstinately to slip on the "subsidiary" halter which the Governor-General had prepared for them, on the other. "His Excellency confidently expects that when the nature of our connexion with the Peishwa and the *justice and moderation of our views* with relation to the Maharatha

empire shall have been sufficiently understood by the Maharatha chieftains, the necessity of any extraordinary precautions for the security of the late arrangement will cease." (Vol. III, p. 117.) "You will state to Scindhia," wrote the Governor-General to the British Agent stationed at the court of the Maharatha chief, "that the uniform object of the endeavours of the Governor-General has been to establish the permanent and general tranquillity of India by securing to every state the *free enjoyment of its just rights and independence*, and by frustrating every project calculated to disturb the possessions, or to violate the rights of the established powers of Hindustan and the Deccan." (Vol. III, p. 122.) The Peshwa and Dowlat Rao Scindhia were however extremely reluctant to take advantage of this "permanent tranquillity" which the ruler of Mysore and other chieftains like the Nizam had been made to enjoy recently, with a singular perversity that irritated the Governor-General, who was so anxious to do them a good turn; and he hoped fervently, that "it may not be difficult to convince Dowlat Rao Scindhia of the *justice and moderation of our views*."

The same motives have influenced the causes and the course of the wars fought from time to time in India by the English. But the records are too voluminous and would occupy many pages of printed matter, if all were to be reproduced here. Nor does the purpose and scope of the work demand any such elaborate treatment. The main object in mentioning these incidents is *not* to point out that the process of conquest in India has been worse than that of other governments in other parts of the world. It is only to show that the claim to moral superiority which the

English have urged in their conduct in the past and at present, based upon similar transactions, is rather weak and untenable; and that under such circumstances to parade an air of superiority is not justified by the facts of the case, and as such it must cause considerable amusement to the Indian mind. The different British administrations in the past have pursued the same policy that other governments all over the world, which launched out on a career of conquest, had to pursue. The tactics are the same. The motives underlying are similar. The results have been identical. Wellesley, Dalhousie, and other Governors-General who followed from time to time a policy of conquest in the past, and the politicians in England who pronounced their benediction upon these exploits, have all contributed their share towards the building of this structure of superiority.

It is quite easy to bring in other incidents and events also, having studied the period pretty thoroughly, to show, that the policy of conquest was generally indulged in to satisfy national or individual or class vanity, and that some of the aggressive schemes are indefensible either from a moral or a financial view. It may be also not altogether out of place to cite one or two instances in Indian history where the government in India made a free use of Indian resources for *imperial purposes and placed the financial responsibility on India*. It is only when all the facts of the case are mentioned that it would be possible for the two parties to understand the views and attitude of the other. If there is anything kept back there will be room for suspicion and distrust. Since English politicians are anxious to settle the Indian business now, they would do well to look back at some of the items in the past

accounts. When the African war in Abyssinia was fought and won, the expenses of the campaign were debited to the Indian exchequer, according to the opinion of the Indian historian, R. C. Dutt. I have been so far fighting shy of introducing the authority of Indian historians, because some of the English readers may say that, after all, it was only the opinion of an *Indian writer*. I have been careful to quote consequently the views of English writers. In the case of Mr. Dutt very few who have gone through his writings will suspect him of ill-will towards the English. On the other hand, the present generation of Indian scholars is inclined to treat the works of Mr. Dutt as being too conservative and "pro-English" in their tone. When Mr. Dutt wrote, the feeling of Indian nationalism was unborn. There was no distrust of English intentions. The British connection was looked upon as the best that India could expect. So, no one would suspect this ardent admirer of English connections as in any way trying deliberately to place the English in a false position. Describing the conduct of this Abyssinian war which was brought to a successful conclusion by Napier of Magdala, Mr. Dutt, C.I.E., says:—"The cost of the war was enormous, and a part of it was debited to India under the plea that the necessity of the war had arisen chiefly from the effect which the impunity of the king of Abyssinia would have upon the eastern mind, and therefore *on the interests of the Indian Empire*! The debiting of the cost of an African war to India was bad, and the argument used to justify it worse," says this very moderate historian. ("England and India," p. 102.) Similarly, when the war in China had to be fought to impose upon the inhabitants of that country the hard terms

depriving it of its own rights to certain of the territories, *since China refused to take in Indian opium*, it was the Indian army that was used to humiliate China and make her to accept opium. ("England and India," R. C. Dutt.)

The same writer also describes the gradual stages by which the Indian cotton industry was strangled by unfair competition from Lancashire. "In the early days of the Company's rule, fabrics produced by Indian weavers supplied the markets of Europe, and men still living can remember the days when every village in the weaving districts had its own looms, and millions of Indian weavers were supported by that profitable industry," wrote Mr. Dutt in 1897, in his book, "England and India." (P. 127.) "How this industry was gradually strangled and destroyed, first by protective duties imposed on Indian goods in England, and then by an unequal competition, how Indian weavers who were content with three pence or four pence a day found themselves ruined by the cheaper products of English looms, and how the weaver communities were compelled to abandon their trade and to depend on agriculture or petty trade, or on humble and ill-paid appointments in public or private offices," — and thus creating the modern race of clerks and their clerical mentality, — "all this forms one of the saddest chapters in the history of British India," says Mr. Dutt in a very restrained and apologetic tone. (P. 128.) But this is a chapter which the English are not fond of reading. "What happened to weavers also happened to the other industrial classes," says the same authority, whose belief in the beneficent nature of the British connection was quite profound. "It is a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by

the country on which she has become dependent." But can any wrong be done to India as long as there are Conservatives and others to "safeguard" her interests? "It was stated in evidence (1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to the period could be sold for a profit in the British market at a price from 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 per cent. and 80 per cent. in their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitory duties and decrees existed, *the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset and could scarcely have been set in motion, even by the power of the steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacturer. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated; would have imposed preventive duties on British goods and would have preserved her own productive industry from annihilation. This act of self-defence was not permitted her, she was at the mercy of the stranger. British goods were forced on her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately to strangle a competitor with whom she could not have contended on equal terms.*" (Mill and Wilson: "History of British India," Vol. VII, p. 385.) Even some of the fair-minded among the English historians have been compelled to admit the unfairness and injustice of the whole procedure. If at present Lancashire is suffering from the effects of industrial depression and the decline in Indian markets in spite of all its many facilities, who can say that it is not part of the law of retribution which works out slowly but surely in the

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life of an individual as of a nation? "God's mills grind slow but sure," and in their grinding the Lancashire mills also have been caught. The decline of the Indian indigenous cotton industry was essential for the prosperity of Lancashire, for England. If the Indian industry, after many bitter and unjust disappointments, which constitute one of the saddest chapters in the history of English connections, an account of which is unnecessary for the present purpose, but an account of which is not very creditable to English sense of justice,—has succeeded in slowly coming into her own, who among the fair-minded among the English shall say that this was not what England deserved?

But it is not only in the economic history of the eighteenth century and of the nineteenth that there has been a maladjustment of the relations, but also in other departments and connections. This is however a "reserved" subject and discretion is the better part of valour! Commenting upon the increase in the military expenditure, the same historian R. C. Dutt, says:—"This great increase in the military expenditure is *not due to wars in India*, for there have been no real wars in India during the past forty years, but to expeditions and defence works *outside the limits of India*. Conquests in the east as far as the frontiers of China, and the dominions of France, conquests in Chitral and the extension of the frontier line in the west into Afghanistan and Baluchistan, have been made, and are being made, from the resources of India." "A hope was held out to the peoples of India, and a pledge was given in the Queen's gracious proclamation of 1858, that the cost of military expeditions outside India will not be charged to Indian

revenues." How some of these pledges have been observed is a matter of history. The evidence given by Sir Henry Brackenbury before the Royal Commission is interesting. "In the first place I would say that the army in India *is largely in excess of the requirements for the preservation of internal order in India*. The strength of the army in India is calculated to allow of a powerful field army being placed on or *beyond the Indian frontier*, in addition to the obligatory garrisons required for keeping order in India. The necessity for maintaining in India the powerful field army in addition to the obligatory garrisons, is caused by the approach of a great military power into a position which enables her directly to threaten Afghanistan, to which we are under treaty obligations, and indirectly to threaten the safety of India herself. The foreign policy of India *is directed entirely from England* by Her Majesty's Government, and it is part of British policy generally—indeed, the object of British foreign policy, as I believe it to be, to secure Great Britain's rule over her Empire. If we desired to maintain British rule in *India only for India's sake*, then I think it would be fair to make India pay to the uttermost farthing. But I cannot but feel that England's interest in keeping India under British rule is enormous. India employs millions of English capital, and Indian commerce has been of immense value to Great Britain. Therefore it seems to me that India, being held by Great Britain *not only for India's sake, but for Great Britain's sake*, the latter should pay a share of this expenditure for this purpose. And in estimating what that share should be, I think, that England should behave *generously* to India, because, in the first place, England is a rich country and India is a poor country."

Sir Henry Brackenbury also stated that if the question of the frontier was done away with, the Indian army might be reduced to 20,000 British troops and 50,000 Indian troops. (Dutt: "England and India," p. 141.) From these and other instances which have been held back for various reasons, it would be obvious that the management of India's affairs in the past was often undertaken with a view to safeguard imperial interests, and that India was used as a pawn in the Imperial game from the time that Wellesley sent troops to Egypt and Arabia to counteract the French menace. But it is the political pharisaism that India is held for the good of India mainly that is so irritating to the Indian mind. One would prefer the blunt and outspoken admission of the late Lord Birkenhead, to the hypocritical pretences which one comes across pretty frequently nowadays. Unless the question is removed from the maze of hypocrisies and self-delusions in which it is at present enveloped, there is very little chance of a satisfactory settlement. The English, — those among them who have good ideals — may deceive themselves under the belief that they are governing India for the good of India. But they may be assured that, not infrequently, some of them are the dupes of self-interest. The British conquest has adopted the same tactics and followed the principles as any other in history according to the Indian point of view; but if the Conservatives are firmly persuaded of their "*divine mission*" they would do well to carry on some propaganda, besides that which is done by the "Daily Mail," and the sermons which one hears from other papers about the need for *good behaviour* on the part of Indians; and the "indefeasible right of the English" about which Churchill seems to be very

much obsessed. The British occupation is as good as any other in history, in some respects a shade better; but that is hardly a convincing reason — at least to the Indians — to think that there has been a Christian method or manner in the transaction, or that God has been specially guiding and leading them, like the Israelites of old, to this land “flowing with milk and honey” in the form of pagodas and rupees. To the extent that there is a divine power shaping and influencing human conduct — individual and corporate — the British also can claim a share of divine guidance. But it is extremely unfair, false, if not sacrilegious, to drag the Deity into the discussion. The facts of Indian history have to be greatly twisted from the normal to arrive at that conclusion. On the other hand, there are many Indians who draw an entirely opposite conclusion about the working of the divine power from the same facts, with greater show of reason. Perhaps some of the English readers may not be aware of the incident, that just before the death of Lala Lajput Rai, the great Indian patriot, he denied the existence of a God, for the *one reason* that if there was a just God he would not tolerate the state of affairs in India! It has been just cited to show that there are people who are as strongly persuaded that the present situation does not and cannot exist with the sanction of God. I do not endorse or refute the view expressed by the Indian patriot. It has been just mentioned to show that the “divine mission” which the Conservatives and others claim is not very appealing or convincing to the Indian mind.

One can understand the English attitude which says: “Well, you are *inferior* to us in your physical size and standards; but when they plume themselves

on their higher moral standards which they profess to follow as Christians, there is something radically wrong in their view of themselves, of others, or of both. It is the complacent assumption of superiority on the moral plane that is the most mischievous and irritating, and at the same time the most difficult to combat, since there is no possibility of forcing an issue. Here the English people more or less adopt the logic of one of the women characters in Shakespeare who says:—"I have no other reason but a woman's. I think him so, because I think him so." The Englishman will say:—"You are inferior," and if the Indian were to ask him to explain himself, the Englishman may perhaps say with redoubled force, "I tell you, you *are* inferior." But that is not going to be so tamely accepted as it used to be in the past, and the Britisher will have to show clearly wherein he is superior, instead of taking refuge under his doctrine of superiority and infallibility in the tropics! Mr. Torrens, M.P., clinches the issue very well when he puts the case in the following words:—"But there never was an error more groundless than that which represented the ancient systems of Indian rule as decrepit or degrading despotisms, untempered by public opinion. *It accords too well with the arrogance of national self-love, and serves too easily to lull the conscience of aggression, to pretend that those whom it has wronged were superstitious slaves, and that they must have so remained but for the distinterested violence of foreign civilisation, introduced by the sword in hand.*" ("Empire in Asia.") This is a clear and blunt statement made by an English writer and member of Parliament about the philosophy of imperialism which never does anything but good to its victims!

"This pretentious theory is refuted by the admissions of men whose knowledge cannot be disputed," whose authority cannot be easily set aside, except by those who do not care for any authority but their own. What do modern politicians care for the views, the antiquated opinions, of old and ignorant statesmen and writers like Sir John Malcolm, Elphinstone, Sir T. Munro, Mill, and many others when they have the opinions of expert authorities like Miss Mayo! Their views may be of some value for the period when they wrote. But for the present they are useless. The Indians have deteriorated since then, though such a view places them on the other horn of the dilemma, as it is difficult to reconcile that with the progress which has been claimed under British rule so consistently and loudly!

Many of the modern readers would be interested to hear what Dr. Johnson said about the Indian government. This versatile genius had his pet schemes for the administration of India, which perhaps a good many of the present day politicians may be inclined to support. "I am clear that the best plan for the government of India is a despotic governor; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the best government; and supposing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governor whose power is checked let others plunder that he himself may be allowed to plunder; but if despotic, he sees that the more he lets others plunder, the less there will be for himself, so he restrains them." (Boswell's "Life of Johnson," Vol. IV, p. 43, Hill's edition.) These words contain some sense when viewed in the light of the conditions which prevailed in Bengal and other parts of India during the days of Clive and Hastings.

It is necessary to explode this historical myth of Western excellence which like all superstitions refuse to be easily beaten, in order to show that the claims to moral superiority which the early Governors-General urged and which some of the writers put forward now, proceeded as much from ignorance as from presumption. "But the Government of Southern Asia, when we began to meddle in their affairs, were strangers to the system of penal laws, which were then among the cherished institutions of our own in nearly every other European state. While no Catholic in Ireland could inherit freehold, command a regiment, or sit on the judicial bench, while Catholics in England were excluded from office and from the exercise of the franchise till the third quarter of the nineteenth century in England; while in France the Huguenot weaver was driven into exile beyond the seas; and while in Sweden none but Lutherans could sit as jurors, and in Spain no heretic was permitted Christian burial; Sunnis and Shiahhs, Maharathas and Sikhs, competed freely for distinction and profit in almost every city and camp of Hindustan. While the various adventurers might bring about their defeat and mutual destruction, the peasants continued to lead their usual life." "Property was as carefully protected as by laws as in Europe," says General Briggs. ("The Land-Tax of India Considered.") "The municipal and village institutions of India," says Sir John Malcolm, "were competent, from the power given them by the common consent of all ranks, to maintain order and peace within their respective circles. In Central India, their rights and privileges never were contested even by tyrants, while all just princes founded their reputation and claim to popularity on attention to



them." (Malcolm, Vol. I, Chapter XLI.) Sir Thomas Munro has also expressed the same opinion. "In all Indian villages there was a regularly constituted municipality, by which its affairs, both of revenue and police, were administered, and which exercised, to a very great extent, magisterial and judicial authority." (Malcolm: Vol. I, Chap. XII.) Warren Hastings was fully alive to the needs of the local situation, to the extent that is possible for any well-meaning Englishman; and he was compelled to admit that the taking over of the whole criminal jurisdiction of the country into their hands "was an usurpation, but they could not avoid it." Since "they would have had clashing powers," and "that justice might have a footing, by hook or crook, in Bengal, we took it under our own protection." ("Letter to Mr. Dupre," January 1773).

It is not to be inferred from these that the *conditions were quite ideal before the advent of the English*, and that with their appearance there set in a steady deterioration in the political, cultural, and economic life of the people of the land, as some of the Indian politicians and writers want to make out! Nor was India a hell from where the English have rescued her; a place overrun by evil spirits and wicked monsters who gave plenty of work for St. George! It was not an abode of bliss where all was peace and happiness as some of the Indian historians have tried to prove by way of reply to the exaggerations of the English writers. The truth is mid-way between the two. But one can naturally understand the anxiety of the English historians like Dr. V. Smith and others to depict the condition as utterly corrupt, degraded, and wretched. That would *serve to enhance the value and the*

*character of their achievements*, and it is only if the background is painted in sufficiently lurid colours that the other parts of the picture would benefit by contrast. This political painting has been developed as a fine art just as landscape painting. Very few would be deceived by it except those who want to deceive themselves. The English administration has many grand things to its credit; but the grandeur is not increased by misrepresenting, deliberately or otherwise, the true nature of the conditions which prevailed then. That peace and security had declined with the fall of the Moghul Empire, that the provincial despots behaved tyrannically, that the ordinary life of the people was threatened by the fury of the civil wars and storms that broke around them occasionally, no one denies. But when along with this, other dark ingredients are also mixed, to give greater credit to their own achievements, then there is difficulty in reconciling the outlines of the picture with the known facts of history. But such views have been very often put forward in the past. Because all the writers on history were Englishmen. The materials and facilities for research were not easily available to the Indians. But at present Indian scholarship is making its way rapidly in these fields, and it is only when *both sides are heard* that one can form a right impression of the whole conditions. One can easily understand the reason for the tenacity with which this view has been maintained by the English. It provides one of the most powerful buttresses for their position in India. It is one of the most important justifications for their existence here. The process of redemption from the ignorance and barbarity of the past is not yet over, and consequently India has to submit for some time more to English

political tutelage. Since the English are on this civilising errand, the Indians may have to put up with some temporary inconveniences. Such is the attitude that they want the Indians to adopt.

"From factories to forts, from forts to fortifications, from fortifications to garrisons, garrisons to armies; and from armies to conquests; the gradations were natural; and the result inevitable; where we could not find a danger," — and in India it was fatally easy to find one lurking in every Native State bush inside, or frontier shrub outside, — "we were determined to find a quarrel," said Sir Philip Francis. ("Speech on Indian Affairs, 1787.") The vision of some of the English administrators in India was so keen that they could see danger from a distance, even if there was none, or very little, in the past. Parliament might lay down the salutary law that "to pursue schemes of conquest was repugnant to the wishes, honour, and policy of the English nation"; and however much even a fair-minded and peace-loving Governor-General like Cornwallis may be disposed to hate the policy of annexation, there was very little inducement to those who were actually holding the reins to diminish their enthusiasm for a ride across the neighbouring territory. "I deprecate the effects of the almost universal frenzy which has seized even some of the heads which I thought the soundest in the country *for conquest and victory*. I shall come to the army with a determination to submit to no insult or aggression, but with an anxious desire to have an opportunity of showing my generosity." (Lord Cornwallis: "Letter to Malcolm," 14th August, 1805.) His generosity was later on shown at the Treaty of Seringapatam concluded with Tippoo after the Mysore war! Thus all

along it has been very difficult, even with the best of intentions on the part of those who handled the reins, to preserve peace, because there were different factors and considerations and forces which rendered the adherence to a policy of peace difficult and trying.

Macaulay and other writers have been trying to justify the conduct of the English in India by *blaming the people of the land*. It is interesting to read through the following description of the condition of the East India Company's service and the conduct of its servants given by Burke side by side with that of Macaulay. It may be admitted that Burke was not above the weakness of over-drawing the picture for the sake of rhetorical effect, as Macaulay was for the literary, though not to the same extent. But even making the necessary allowance under this head, the main outlines of the picture are true. Denouncing the incredible indifference or the culpable connivance of the authorities at Madras, Burke says:—"It is there that the public is robbed. It is robbed in its army; it is robbed in its civil administration, it is robbed in its credit, it is robbed in its investment which forms the commercial connection between that country and Europe. . . . In consequence of this double game, *all the territorial revenues have*, at one time or other, been *covered by those locusts, the English soucars*. . . . Thus these miserable princes are continued in their seats, for no other purpose than to render them in the first instance objects of every species of extortion; and, in the second, to force them to become a sort of subordinate tyrants, the ruin and calamity, not the fathers and cherishers of their people." It is interesting to compare this picture with what has been given by Macaulay. It is not in the least surprising that the Eng-

lish people in India behaved in such a tyrannical manner during the later part of the eighteenth century. Even public men and ministers in England showed a very low type of public morality. Corruption was rampant among the superior ranks, among the ministers of State. Fox, as Pay-master of the forces, helped himself with public funds, as Mr. Robertson shows in his book "England under the Hanoverians." Further revolting details need not be brought in here to support the view that the standard of public morality, both in England and among the servants of the East India Company, was hardly such as to justify the exalted tone in which Macaulay and other writers have described the conduct of the English always. Nevertheless, this view is very commonly held, and it has served very powerfully to reinforce the stream of racial and political pride. It is only when English historians and poets like Kipling try to elevate the British occupation into a very exalted plane, a class by itself, and drape its ugliness by an attractive imperial garb later on fashioned for it, and offer before it incense and praise, that the difficulty arises. The same mercenary motives, the same high-handed methods, the same selfish aims, have marked the progress of the English conquest of India as of all other conquests in the world. To parade an air of superiority is unjustifiable and wrong under the circumstances.

"In such a state of affairs, what influence can exist except that of fear? Can those who have been deprived of their power, their wealth, like the Government who have been the instruments of their ruin? Is it possible that their relations, friends, and former dependents should not sympathise with them? And will not the people, with much greater severity than

they were ever before, be ready to concur in their complaints?" asked very aptly Mr. Shore. (F. J. Shore: "Notes on Indian Affairs, Vol. I, p. 162.) "The conduct of the British Government in India had not at all times been such as to induce to believe, that at some time or other improper advantage would not be taken of the article in question," wrote Col. Arthur Wellesley to his brother, the Governor-General, dealing with the conditions of one of the treaties concluded with a Native Prince in the South. The following statement from another writer is also significant in this context. "The history of the British connection with India recorded the names of many chiefs and princes whom we began with advancing to honour, or at least depriving of a great part of their territories or reducing them to political annihilation." The process of British expansion cannot be easily interpreted as moving always in a grand stream of justice and righteousness, without doing violence to the known facts of history, except by those who know absolutely nothing about it. But it may be said without exaggeration that it is this prejudiced and mistaken view of the unique character of English conquest of India, something like the conquest of Palestine by the Israelites, that is partly responsible for the feeling of *political superiority*, which more than any other current, has contributed towards swelling the stream of racial *presumption*. It is the firm belief — and "obstinacy is never so stiff as when it is a wrong belief" — as Mr. Butler puts it — in the *moral mission* of British imperialism that has strengthened the feeling of racial superiority. The moral hallucination was perhaps the most powerful among the factors.

Not only was the process of British expansion dic-

tated by humanitarian considerations, but the expenditure incurred during the many wars has been dumped on the Indian tax-payer. In the "Petition from the East India Company to Parliament," February, 1858, submitted by that association with a view to prevent the sentence of political execution about to be passed on it, the East India Company recounts in triumphant, if not boastful terms, the glowing fact that "*during the period of about a century which has since elapsed, the Indian possessions of this country have been governed and defended from the resources of those possessions, without the smallest cost to the British Exchequer, which to the best of your petitioner's knowledge and belief cannot be said of any of the numerous foreign dependencies of the Crown.*" But still the English seem to be afraid of the repudiation of a debt a part of which has been incurred in the course of past military expeditions! The feeling of superiority was however unconsciously developed till at last now it has become an unquestionable article in the political creed of the compassionate Imperialists, as unalterable as the law of the Medes and Persians. In the past India was conquered for the good of the Indians. In the present it is ruled for their own good. In the future it must be preserved for their own good! How natural and convincing looks the process of the argument to Churchill and others!

Burke, Fox, or Bright might protest against the injustice done to the people of India by the servants of the East India Company. Cowper might raise his poetical notes against the oppression of the people of India.

"Hast Thou, suckled at fair Freedom's breast,  
Exported slavery to the conquered East?"

*Pulled down the tyrants India served with dread  
And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead?  
Gone thither armed and hungry, returned full  
Fed with the richest veins of the Moghul,  
A despot big with power obtained by wealth  
And that obtained by rapine and by stealth?  
With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,  
And left their virtues and thine own behind;  
And having trucked thy soul, brought home the  
fee*

To tempt the poor to sell thyself to thee?"

(*"Expostulation"*, lines 364-75.)

Hastings was an old school-fellow of the poet at Westminster, and Cowper was in a position to know of the incidents of the period of Hastings. But these gentle voices of dissent and protest were drowned in the clamorous cries of the Imperialists.



## CHAPTER XII

### *Defects in the moral argument—continued*

Perhaps in describing the process of conquest some of the readers may ask:—"Where is the need to bring in the *military* events in the history of *racial* relations?" The military factor had a profound influence on the outlook of the English people in India. One has to read through the speeches of members of Parliament, of people like Palmerston, and of historians like Macaulay, and of administrators like Wellesley, to see how the military efficiency of the troops had a tremendous effect on the racial outlook of the English people. One is not criticising the *morality of English conquests in this connection unless they have been* defended by English writers. It is unfair to judge the conduct of the English by high, abstract Christian principles which cannot be easily applied in the ordinary course of everyday transactions. It is only when some of the indefensible acts have been defended by the English historians that the difficulty arises. These have been defended partly on the ground that against the Indians it was expedient to adopt any line of conduct, that it was not necessary to be over-scrupulous in one's dealings with such an *inferior nation!* It is against such a procedure that one has protested. The British administration have not been guilty of any unusual moral lapses in their conquests. They have followed the policy that all conquering nations have adopted. The difficulty arises when subsequent historians have

come to glorify the whole thing with glowing descriptions and interpretations. If this is not borne in mind perhaps some of the comments may appear rather unfair. One is anxious to be *scrupulously fair* to the outlook and conduct of the different parties concerned, and not to assign any blame rashly. If one were to read through the accounts of the wars fought in India given by the English historians, the conclusion, that there was not a single war to which they were not reluctantly dragged in, is irresistible. Invariably the fault is on the part of one or the other of the Indian States. The trouble arose from the treachery of Tippoo, the profligacy of Siraja Dawlah, the arrogance of the Burmese, the insolence of the Sikhs, the duplicity of the Maharathas, the dishonesty of the Nizam, the incursions of the Rajputs, the treachery of the Rohillas, the vindictiveness of the Afghans, the aggressiveness of the Nepalese. The English are always the aggrieved party. Now to anyone with a sense of humour, such a situation cannot but be a source of amusement. That the English possessing a well-trained army, superior in many respects to the combined forces of the Native States, should have been the victims of the insolence of these States, appears somewhat unnatural, if not ludicrous! It is as if the lion complained about the menaces of the fox or of other animals against him! Yet that is what most of the English historians want the people of England and of India to believe. Inevitably this line of argument has also served to increase their *pride*. They were seldom in the wrong. Always the provocation was given, the trouble originated with, the conflagration was started by, the Native States. Thus the English writers, consciously or otherwise, have

been responsible for aggravating the *spirit of superiority*. Of course, military superiority was always there. That it was the terrible jealousy and disunion of the Native powers that encouraged the pretensions of the East India Company, these patriotic writers often overlook. Whatever the motive, the results have been invariably the same, and this factor has confirmed the English feeling of superiority.

It was mainly to satisfy the awkward questions of a few of the troublesome members of Parliament, and of the Court of Proprietors in England, that the blame used to be shifted to other shoulders in a self-deluding and self-righteous mood. But this fact is ignored by most of the writers. That the administrators in India would be accused of breaking the law laid down by Parliament, if they took the aggressive, was often the reason for assigning the responsibility for the commencement of hostilities to the Indian States, is an obvious fact in Indian history which seems to have escaped the attention of some of the English historians. The procedure is just as amusing as if the English had said that all the wars on the Continent during the last century had started with France, or if the French retorted that the English or the Germans were to be solely blamed for all their wars. The attempt to absolve themselves from all responsibility and to take the credit only for the results, is a very convenient way of getting over uncomfortable situations. From a perusal of English books on Indian history it would look as though the English had always acted on the defensive, and that they were the victims of the conspiracy of the Indian ambitions and aggressiveness! The feeling of pride was also increased from that source.

There is yet another factor which has conspired from the *administrative side* to increase the presumption of the Englishman in India. He views with admiration the grand achievements of his countrymen here. He contemplates with sublime satisfaction the many splendid works of public utility carried out by the English government. A comprehensive and an excellent system of law, and an efficient judiciary which administered impartial law brought into existence by the English government, are before him. Railways have been opened up, and the different parts of the land have been connected by a splendid net-work of rail-roads. Canals have been constructed providing water supply to thousands of acres of land. Huge irrigation schemes which have transformed the nature of the soil and the quantity of agricultural output have sprung into existence. Educational institutions have been flourishing in different parts of the country, either wholly maintained by the Government or subsidised by it. The grim spectre of famine has ceased to frighten the villager as it used to do in the past, and the terrors of absolute famine are unknown. Public health and sanitation have been improved remarkably. Trade, commerce, and industry have been encouraged, and an excellent system of internal exchange and currency introduced. The English missionaries have carried the message of the Christian Gospel into the corners of the land "sunk in superstition." Government has abolished "sati" and other inhuman rites and have raised the people from their degradation. English administrators have laboriously built up one of the most efficient systems in the world. English businessmen have opened up the economic resources of the country, started fac-

tories in different parts of the land and increased its productive capacity. English engineers have performed some of the most marvellous works in modern engineering. Government have preserved order and given security to the different communities. The army has protected the country from the dangers of a foreign invasion.

Naturally, the Englishman, in a mood of extreme self-complacency and satisfaction and with a triumphant air of pride, asks the people of India:—"Can you ever secure such blessings except under our protection, our considerate and careful tutelage?" This attitude can be seen in all books which have appeared on India. The readers are quite familiar with some of these, and it is not necessary to give the list of books which treat of the glorious accomplishments of the English in India. Thus, surrounded by a glorious company of administrative witnesses, the Englishman is naturally impatient when the captious Indian tries to prick the bubble of self-complacency by a few awkward questions. Were the railways constructed for the economic benefit of India merely? Were they not meant for transporting the troops more quickly from one part of the country to the other? Were not these English companies aided by the state, with Indian money? Do not the earnings of the companies leave the country? Are there many Indians in the superior railway and administrative posts? Are not the materials still purchased at heavy prices from abroad, favouring the English manufacturers at the expense of Indian producers? Were not discriminating rates given to English businessmen in the past? Is not the administration one of the most costly in the world, and that for the poorest country also. Is not the mili-

tary also in the same condition? Can a poverty-stricken land like India maintain such an expensive establishment? Is not India a peace-loving country? Is not India the poorest — if not one of the poorest — country in the world? When the Indian continues in this manner, the Englishman loses his patience, and accuses him of ingratitude! Thus the situation grows from bad to worse.

Now, this is one of the powerful sources from which racial pride has received considerable nourishment. The Englishman naturally contemplates with a good deal of *self-righteous satisfaction* the grand accomplishments of the countrymen. He asks, and it has been very often asked — if India could have enjoyed such benefits except under British rule? He is generally blind to the other side of the picture. He fails to realise that according to the Indians some of these are a very costly decoration, if there is no racial freedom, no real political power. The Englishman forgets that the blessings of peace can be brought at too prohibitive a price. The Britisher cannot understand the attitude of the Indian who sets a higher store for political self-expression, for liberty, for independence, although he considers them as his own "birth right!" This is a very important reason for the unsatisfactory nature of the present racial and political situation. The Englishman is always thinking of the *past*. He admires the wonders of past achievement. The Indian looks to the *present* and to the *future*, and finds many obstacles in the path of further progress. Thus it is not easy to reconcile the view-points of the two parties. This factor might serve to explain the inability of the Englishman to see, and his impatience to understand, the present Indian mentality from one

side. From the other side it would serve to explain his reluctance to appreciate Indian demands which he considers as an unfavourable reflection on his past achievements. He fails often to realise the fact, that *the demands of the people of India have arisen from the logical results of the process of past conduct of the English in India*; that, because the circumstances and the environment for further enjoyment of rights and privileges have been made available, the Indians are demanding still further freedom. Instead of considering these demands as *a creditable reflection on the Englishman's contribution in the past*, he views with distrust and suspicion such attempts on the part of the people. The Britisher finds it difficult to realise that the people of India once set on the road to further progress can never be arrested, that it is only the natural complement of past efforts, and that attempts to do so will only serve to create further bitterness between the two parties, as it has already done to a certain extent at present, unfortunately. The Englishman considers the Indian as wanting in gratitude. The Indian considers the Englishman reactionary and lacking in courtesy. Thus from the *administrative side* also the problem of racial relations has been profoundly influenced. If the fruits of past labour are to be reaped fully, then there seems to be *an urgent necessity for altering the outlook of the Englishman towards the whole problem*. He has to resist the natural temptation to dwell on the magnificence of the past and to try and adjust himself to the needs of the present.

There is a particular feature about the superiority of British standards of morality in India which may be accepted for what it is worth. It is

the constant care of the *ruling classes* to behave in a very *careful and studied manner*. They are the conquerors. They have to maintain a higher standard than those whom they govern. Otherwise their superiority would be compromised. Thus there is every inducement and necessity to behave in a very guarded style. But that is not their natural style of morality. That is highly *artificial*. They have to maintain their *prestige* in India. A better standard of morality is maintained partly because their position demands it. The counterpart of this *artificial* behaviour on the part of the conquerors is, that the conquered also have to indulge in a strange, if not *unnatural*, manner of conduct to gain their ends. Force is out of the question. So, some of the Indians brought into touch with the English, take to deceit in order to gain their ends. Then the stronger party exclaims:—"Look, look at the morality of the Indians!" The morality of the Indian is as much the result, and the counterpart, of the morality of the Englishman in India. People who are held down have to resort to other tactics than those adopted by them and others under normal circumstances. The Indian jackal is compelled to steal his food whereas the British lion boldly seizes it! Under the circumstances it is not fair for the latter to accuse the former of cunning, deceit, and treachery, and as following quite a different standard from its own bold course. Yet that is what happened in India. The Roman patricians had to behave in public in a manner consistent with their dignity as members of the ruling aristocracy, and they could not afford to show the crookedness or devious methods adopted by their inferior subjects. And to say that the standard of morality of the Roman patricians under the circum-



stances was superior to that of their terror-stricken subjects would be very unfair. This is not to institute a comparison between the standards of morality between the East and the West. It is only to furnish an explanation for the *higher code of morality* which is said to prevail among the Europeans in India.

One of the factors which favoured the rise of this attitude of superiority was the *striking efficiency and discipline of the English troops* in the early days of British connections with India. The East India Company's forces, as well as the forces of the other European companies, were better disciplined, and better led than the ill-disciplined rabble of the Indian Rajahs which were "gaily decked out for slaughter," as one historian has aptly put it. Under the circumstances the defeat of the troops of the Native Princes was brought about with remarkable ease. The English naturally formed a very poor estimate of the fighting qualities of the Indian troops. That the defect arose from faulty organisation and incompetent leadership, the English themselves have very often admitted subsequently. The English politicians and military authorities have been very profuse in their praises of the invaluable services, and of the splendid fighting qualities, of the Indians during the course of the Great War at the different theatres. If they really meant what they said, the present day attitude of the Conservative party appears rather strange and inexplicable. An active member of this party, and a member of the Simon Commission, expressed his diverting views on this matter. They are extremely amusing, if not comic. "Out of the 350 millions you cannot find sufficient young Indians competent and capable of being made officers. . . . . The approximately

correct data of the population is not 350, but 260 millions. Of these 260 millions, I presume, 230 are agricultural peasants, that not even the Congress would insinuate, were capable of receiving the King's Commission. Of the remaining 30 millions, 15 at the lowest estimate are women. Of the remaining 15, quite seven millions would not be of serving age, and of the remaining 8 millions not a quarter would pass the medical tests. Of the remaining 2 millions at least a million and a half would not be well educated in any sense. Of the remaining half a million very few would have the *smallest ambition to serve in the army*. I doubt if more than 150 individuals all told would be available for officer's commissions of whom only a small fraction—if we were to judge by present standards and present results—would survive Sandhurst, Woolwich, or Cranwell. It can therefore be argued justifiably that the making of an Indian Officer Class in India is destined to be a very lengthy and a very problematic process." (Cadogan: "The India We Saw.") The process of reasoning of the honourable and gallant major is unimpeachable. The figures are eloquent. The conclusion is clear, plain, and unavoidable. Out of the whole population of 350 millions in India there may be just *one* or *two* who would be fit to enter the military heaven which the English have prepared for Indians! Indians are inefficient. They are inferior. Well might Churchill and others say like the Jewish High Priest:—"What further need have we of witnesses"! An interesting part of this exemplary argument is that the Rt. Hon. gentleman need not have come all the way to India, with considerable inconvenience to himself and a good deal of loss to the Indian tax-payer, to establish a

fact — a “presumption” in the words of the member, which is being daily proclaimed from the house — tops by the Conservative press! In England, in the land of military “super-men,” any Tom, Dick, and Harry is fit to become an officer. In India hardly a handful. But the gallant major in his over-anxiety to discredit Indian national and military aspirations is blissfully oblivious to the scathing condemnation of British rule implied in that admirable piece of Conservative causistry which comes with a bad grace from the pen of a distinguished member of the House of Commons and a prominent and responsible member of the Conservative party! How the honourable gentleman found out that “out of half a million very few would have the ambition to serve in the army,” it would be useful to know! After 150 years and more of British occupation, after the constant enjoyment of the rare blessings of peace, progress, and prosperity in India under British rule about which the English politicians and journalists go into occasional ecstasies, when the problem of the Indianisation of the army comes up, the English cannot find a hundred and fifty officers out of the 350 millions! Well, there is something rotten in the state of India. There is something diabolically wrong with the whole “sorry scheme of things entire.” If the tree of British occupation has not yielded any fruit worth the name after such a long interval, there is certainly some organic defect, either in the character and qualifications of the husbandmen, or the nature of the seed, or the character of the soil. The superior and exquisite qualifications of the experienced Conservative farmers are unimpeachable. The quality of the choice democratic seed grown in the special Anglo-Saxon

nursery is exceptionally fine. The ability of the husbandmen cannot be surpassed. The barrowing and ploughing machinery are of the latest pattern. The thrashing, winnowing and other processes are carried through with the help of the most economic appliances. The manure given is of superior variety. Naturally it must be fault of the hard barren tropical *soil*! But why the patient and long-suffering British husbandmen should persist in the cultivation of such a rotten plot when they have others in hand, is the only question for which no answer has been forthcoming!

The whole thing reminds one of the incident mentioned in the Old Testament where Abraham is seen pleading with God to spare the city of Sodom from the destruction with which it was threatened, if it contained only a few righteous people in it! Such is intellectual inspiration provided by some of the finished products of British cultural and imperial superiority! It is difficult to decide whether one should deplore more the intellectual and racial presumption or admire the imperial sophistry or deplore the jingoistic arrogance of such writers and speakers. One has to read through "The Daily Mail" and other papers to see such scintillating stuff proceeding at regular intervals. If specimens like these represent the high-water mark of Conservative and imperial culture, if this is a fair index of the standards of English political superiority of the governing classes, there is nothing surprising when the Indian accepts the truth of the Latin saying "*Ab uno disce omnes.*" (From one specimen judge all the rest.) If funny statements of the above-mentioned type represent the acme of the attainments of British ruling classes, then the people of India have strong

reasons to be apprehensive of the standards of the average English voters—often mis-informed, and somewhat lethargic—who had no opportunities for such exceptional self-improvement. One is reminded of a certain incident which is said to have happened at an American University. A professor was going through some very poor specimens of composition work which he had been severely criticising. After reading through a few of the hopeless ones he said in sheer disgust:—"If you consider yourselves the intellectual cream of the coming generation, then God have mercy on the skimmed milk!" If India had the power to draw up her own standards, it would be interesting to see how many of the present people who are now admitted would get in. After all, it is very easy to frame rules and to draw up standards which are exceptionally splendid! With due respect to the cultural attainments of this writer and of others of the fraternity, it may be mentioned that it is not always the *superiority* of the English arms and discipline that has been responsible for the easy victories and conquests of the English. What Sir John Malcolm said a century before may be recalled in this context. "Hindustan could never have been subdued but by the help of her own children." ("Political History of India".) She could not be held down except with her own consent. That exists in the negative in her fatal disunion. But it would be worth while for the English to ponder how far these despised sons of the soil are going to tolerate the presumption of such writers!

In order to bring home to those fair-minded among the English—it cannot be that all are prejudiced—the monstrosity of the whole position, it may be asked, that if Germany had drawn up the

rules and regulations and fixed the standards for England after conquering her and disarming her, how many of the English would be found fit and competent according to the German standards which have been fixed with a view to exclude the majority among them! Yet the argument of the inferiority of the Indians has been put forward in all seriousness!

Such incredibly fatuous statements marked by monstrous arrogance and unrivalled stupidity, are also significant in another manner. Are they not from a different point of view an eloquent witness, an unmistakable indictment, of the general texture of the *intellectual equipment of English politicians on the Indian question?* *When it comes to the Indian problem, the British virtues of fair-play and justice and impartiality* somehow disappear, leaving behind a curious tissue of prejudices and false and distorted ideas. The English milk of human kindness turns completely sour, acidulated by the mixture of imperial ingredients! As I had occasion to remark before, this writer has surpassed even Macaulay in his estimate of Indian ability! During the days of Macaulay the Cornucopia of British blessings had not been poured on India. But at present after the enjoyment of a century of boasted peace and progress this is the result!

There is another factor from the *administrative* side which has served very powerfully towards depressing the spirit of the people and towards increasing the presumption of the Englishman. It is one of the misfortunes of a foreign domination, that some of the ablest and noblest sons of the soil often find themselves in opposition to the policy of the government, even if that government happened to be the most liberal

and sympathetic in the world. The result often is that they have to suffer in many ways for the courage of their convictions. Sometimes this leads them to a jail life if they have the intrepidity to criticise the policy of the government of the day. Often they retire in disgust from the scenes of their labours and lead a life of enforced seclusion. The vast majority have no particular anxiety to play the role of martyrs. Those who are left sole actors on the stage know how to trim their sails according to the current administrative wind which carries the more fortunate and enterprising among them to the haven of a knighthood, or of other honours, when some of the more ardent and brilliant patriots may be spending their time in jails. In a *really democratic country*, public life attracts the best brains of the land. But in a country like India, it often drives them to the rough fields of opposition and resistance which ends disastrously for them, and in the long run for the public life of the land. Thus the field is often open to those who bask in the administrative sunshine and honours. Some of these people may be easily deluded that by improving their personal and family circumstances they are also serving the cause of the country!

This has a *suicidal effect* on national self-respect. For, all spirit of initiative, of courageous independence, and all scope for honest differences of opinion, do not find a congenial environment to thrive.. Feelings of self-respect have to be subordinated and even sacrificed to the insatiable maw of the monster of administrative prestige. Thus those who form part and parcel of the administration have to adjust their outlook in a particular manner. Some of the people seem to be adepts in this process of shifting their angle of vision, of

adjusting their outlook according to the requirements of the occasion.

There is also another consideration which has contributed powerfully towards the present racial situation. *Some* of the Indian politicians who are out for jobs have been partly responsible for encouraging the present attitude of the English. The Englishman had occasion to find from experience, that these people behaved in the same ill-bred and insolent manner towards their own countrymen as some of the foreigners did. They also found that such politicians made all kinds of promises, and very seldom kept them. Naturally, they have only a poor opinion of the character of Indians. These time-serving politicians have a good deal to answer for at the bar of Indian national self-respect. When the English find some of the Indian politicians prostituting their talents in this disgraceful manner, naturally they have nothing but contempt for them. It is up to them to wipe out the stain on India's honour and self-respect by their future conduct. They sell India's honour for a mess of official pottage. They lose the respect of the Englishman, and of the people of India. It is from such people that the greatest injury has been done to India's national self-respect. "Ireland is a poor country, but a rich country to sell," observed someone. Similarly, India may be a poor country, but some of the obsequious Indian politicians find politics a paying thing and it is a few of these politicians who have been mainly responsible for the racial tragedy *from the Indian side*. These poor people have proved traitors to the cause of national honour, and they have managed to lower the flag of Indian self-respect in the eyes of the Englishman, who has



generally nothing but contempt for the folks who profess to be very patriotic, but who really place their personal, or party, or communal interests before those of the country. It is difficult to estimate the serious damage done to India's honour by these poor victims of communalism. How can they expect to command the respect of the English or of any decent gentleman? If the contempt of the English had been confined to these people who deserved it, then the complaint would not be so very serious. But their sins are often visited on the whole country! This is not without its subtle reaction on the attitude of the government and on the English population in India.

The administration insists rightly on a strict adherence to the rules and regulations prescribed by it on the part of its employees, discourages often all originality and independent thinking, and frowns on all departures from the conventional rut, as it does in all countries. In some cases it puts a heavy premium on administrative uniformity. "Red-tapism" can become a heavy steam-roller which crushes out the individuality of the people working in the different departments. Thus a clerical outlook, a "slave mentality," is developed which is fatal to all sense of self-respect. This increases proportionately the presumption of the *superior officers*. It is all the more tragic because of the colossal problem of unemployment in the country, which has served to demoralise the outlook of the educated youths, who are thrown without any resources but vague and unsatisfied ambitions, into the world. Thus the deterioration and loss of manhood of the country is one of the most deplorable effects of the existing state of affairs, and all the blessings of peace and orderly government can hardly make good this national

catastrophe. Sir John Malcolm, Sir Thomas Munro, and some of the other distinguished, imaginative, and fair-minded among the English administrators were alive to this aspect of the foreign rule, and they have also expressed their opinions freely on the matter. The most popular Deity,—if not the only one—worshipped in the pulpy precincts of the Secretariat Shrine, is the God of Pay and Promotion, and the one aim of the numerous scrambling, perspiring, devotees is to please the presiding high-priest, who often being an Englishman, views with indifference the frantic and undignified efforts to attract his eye. Thus it comes about from the administrative side that the Englishman is inclined to treat unconcernedly the activities of their clerical hands.

This *administrative strand* also furnishes another of the strong strings to the cable of racial superiority. With the Damoclean sword of official displeasure hanging constantly over his head, it is very seldom that a clerk or others in government service would have the courage of their convictions. A clerical friend of mine to whom I referred the passage replied that most of them had "neither courage nor convictions." He was a bit cynical no doubt. Most of the clerks and other subordinates have generally learned from bitter experience to quickly trace "the day's disasters" in their superior's "morning face" as the poet puts it. Thus most of them are adepts at the art of regulating their outlook and views according to the current official winds. While it may be a creditable reflection on their powers of adaptability, it is extremely damaging to their sense of self-respect.

"Prejudice is a mist, which in our journey through the world often dims the brightest and obscures the

best of all good and glorious objects that meet us on our way," said Lord Shaftesbury. During the journey of the vast majority of the English people through India they were greatly troubled by this defect, though unfortunately for others, they were hardly aware of it. "When the judgment is weak, the prejudice is strong." But who will dare maintain that the judgment of such superior persons. was weak? "Opinions founded on prejudice are often sustained with the greatest violence," is admirably illustrated in this and other examples. If some of the statements given above are not slanderous to the reputation of a whole country, to the honour of a whole nation, one would like to know what slander is?

While the pigment of the brown on dark Indian skin is invariably revolting to the sensitive English people, there are one or two things which are tolerated by the majority among them. One such is the colour of the country's coin. It is unnecessary to dwell on that. The other thing is the colour and appearance of the different animals of the country, particularly those in the Indian forests. The "horse shows" and other animals shows are not unpopular with a section of the English residents in India. But the colour of the animals of the forest seems to be more appealing to the majority among them. With the exception of the missionaries, if there is one thing on which the English people are keen about, apart from their business, it is on hunting and fishing. Some of them spend a lot of money on hunting requisites and other materials. Their enthusiasm seems to be keyed up to the highest pitch when it is a matter of "big game" hunting. It would be interesting to find out what all books some of the English people in India read. There

are few who do not know something about the haunts and habits of the wild animals in the country. This is a significant comment on their culture.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *"Manifestation among the different classes"*

One of the most amusing things connected with the feeling of racial pride is the nature of its almost spontaneous growth, its rapid development, and its peculiar manifestation among the different ranks and different professions among the English in India. It would be a really fascinating study for a sociologist to watch the growth of the racial tares among the otherwise pleasant English gardens in the tropics. It has been remarked, that racial exclusiveness to the unhealthy extent it is maintained here, is comparatively unknown in England, and that it is the vitiating contact with Indian environment that is solely responsible for the development of this agitating symptom in the social organism. Many of the English passengers to India in the past — and there are not a few imitators at present — managed to throw overboard during the course of their journey, the finer instincts of fair play and racial charity they had cultivated at home. Thus by the time they rounded the Cape, some of them seem to have succeeded in "unbaptizing themselves," as Burke aptly puts it in his "Impeachment of Warren Hastings," of the virtues of politeness and charity they had learned in their domestic surroundings. The sea water seems to have salted their racial feelings also! When they at last landed at Bombay, most of these people had managed to don a new mental outfit obligingly and freely provided by the elders who were

coming back after a short stay in England. Once in India, these novices manage to carry with them always their racial luggage. The rapidly diminishing stock of racial sanity has to stand further the rude shock of a trying climate, of an unfamiliar atmosphere, of the numerous petty annoyances incidental to a life in the tropics. The strange social usages of India increase the difficulty. A preliminary contact with the old members of the exclusive and caste-bound clubs of Calcutta, Madras or Bombay, where the new arrivals spend a few days undergoing a brief, but intensive social training, is sufficient to prune quite effectively the spontaneous impulses of fair play of an unprejudiced Britisher. Some of these expert social gardeners quickly and cleverly graft on the tender stem the local creeper of racial arrogance. The words of Wordsworth contained in his exquisite ode "On the Intimations of Immortality," may aptly be applied to the people newly arrived in India.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing boy,  
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,—  
He sees it in his joy;  
The youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;

At length the man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day."

The process is more or less similar. "Heaven lies about" the English stranger in India,—the azure expanse of a Indian tropical sky; and just as the "shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the

growing boy," so also the shades of the racial prison-house begin to confine the movements of the Englishman. The English youth, "who daily farther from the east must travel," — in this case he has travelled more and more to the east, — "still is Nature's priest," and he also becomes a racial novice. After a brief stay in India his idealism and sense of fair play and racial justice "fade into the light of common day."

"Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a mother's mind,

And no unworthy aim,  
The homely nurse doth all she can  
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,  
Forget the glories he hath known  
And that imperial palace whence he came."

The Anglo-Indian world fills the lap of the new-arrival with pleasures of its own, and with something of a mother's mind and love, and with no bad or unworthy aim, the old homely Anglo-Indian nurse does all she can to make her foster-child, her new inmate, forget the glories, and in some cases the virtues, he had known; nor to think too much of the beauties of the past life at home, but of the needs and comforts of the present.

It is a well-known fact that small white *children* in America are not repelled by the dark complexion of their negro play-mates. Similarly, it is amusing to watch the English children born in India, or even brought up in India, showing their affection towards their "ayahs" or dry nurses. I used to watch them playing in the parks and gardens of Madras, and was struck by the absolute and happy freedom from any freezing feeling of racial prejudice. They used to

abandon themselves whole-heartedly to their games wherein the children of the well-to-do Indians that came there also joined without any reserve. But later on they go to England for their education, and when they come back as members of the Civil Service, or in some other branches of service or in business, they seem to forget all their early memories, and they are completely changed beings. Children teach us many wise things. Racial wisdom is generally "hid from the wise and prudent," and has been revealed unto "babes." The elders in India are not evidently very much benefitted by these lessons! In one sense all the English people who come to India for the first time are babes. The whole trouble arises from the training of their racial foster-parents!

It is not an exaggeration to say, that the story of racial relations, and consequently of political connections, would have told an entirely different and delightful tale, if the newly-arrived Englishman had been left to find out his own social way in India, if some of the older residents had not managed to inject a little of the racial virus into the minds of the impressionable youth. One had occasions for observing many a time the conduct of some of these people who had just arrived in India—missionaries and business men. It seemed to me that on the first occasion, or during the first few occasions, of their contact with Indians, they were generally free from any disgusting taint of race consciousness and pride. But if one happened to meet them after a month or so in the country, they will hardly recognise you; and if at all they did so, it is with a disgusting air of patronage and arrogance that induces you to withhold your hand while receiving them and to make



use of your foot for the occasion! That was what the courtesy of some of them deserved.

Just as raw recruits are trained in the different military camps and cast into the same mould by the serjeants, so also some of these old, prejudice-ridden inhabitants, with their outlook warped, their horizon circumscribed, their sympathies dried up in the tropical atmosphere, where their interests are often severely limited to their parochial activities; manage to instil into the whirling mentality of the stranger, something of the racial venom — to them it has ceased to appear in that sinister light — a few germs of this racial elephantiasis. With the slow tanning of the outer skin in the tropics, the inner tissues of some of them seem to have been affected! The youngster is solemnly warned about the impropriety of moving freely with the "subject" races, with the "dirty Indians." He is urged to keep up his position and dignity as member of a ruling race, to keep unsullied his regent function, as an honourable duty to his country; although he may have precious little to do with it, unless he happened to be connected with the Civil Service. Colour is the "open sesame" to the English clubs in India.

"Young British officials go to India most imperfectly equipped for their responsibilities," said Sir Bampfylde Fuller. But an Englishman is a versatile being. "They learn no law worth the name, little Indian history," — excepting what is found in Maccaulay's "Essays," "no political economy, and gain a smattering of one Indian vernacular. In regard to other branches of the service, matters are still more unsatisfactory. Young men who are to be police officers, are sent out with no training whatever," —

some of them are born not made! — “though for the proper discharge of their duties an intimate acquaintance with Indian life and ideas is essential. They land in India in absolute ignorance of the language. . . . So also with forest officers, medical officers, engineers and (still more surprising) educational officers. . . . It is hardly too much to say that this is an *insult to the intelligence of the country*.” But is it not as much a disgrace to the sense of responsibility of the English public? (“Sir Bampfylde Fuller: Studies in Indian Life and Sentiment.”)

“The British who come to India to rule it have been brought up and educated in accordance with methods as remote from, and as irreconcilable with, Asiatic ideas, as it is possible for them to be. In their work and in their pleasure they keep as aloof as possible from the people they govern,” remarks Mr. Hyndman. (“The Truth about India,” p. 10, New York.) The situation in which an English stranger, particularly an English civilian, finds himself placed is well described by Aldous Huxley. “Three hundred and twenty million Indians surround him; he feels incomparably superior to them all, from the coolie to the Maharajah, from the untouchable to the thoroughbred Brahmin, from the illiterate peasant to the holder of half a dozen degrees from European Universities. He may be ill-bred, stupid,” as some of them are — “poorly educated; no matter. *His skin is white. Superiority in India is a question of epidermis.*” (“The Bookman,” 26th February.)

The same peculiarity in the outlook and conduct of the English in India is mentioned by another English writer. “Of all the Western nations the English are the *least capable of appreciating the qualities of Indian*

civilisation. Of all races, they are the least assimilable. They carry to India all their own habits and ways of life; squatting, as it were in armed camps; and returning, sending out new men to take their place, equally imbued with English ideals and habits, equally unassimilable. Facility of communication has only emphasised and strengthened this attitude. The Englishman sends his children home to be educated; commonly his wife will spend at least half of her time at home; he himself returns every few years; his centre is not India but England. *Between him and the Indian the gulf is impassable.*" (Lowes Dickinson: "Essay on the Civilisation of India, China, and Japan," pp. 18-19.)

"I have met men in the I.C.S., who had been there for a score of years. They knew few Indians; they had rarely discussed public affairs with them, they could not answer accurately some of the most elementary questions about Indian life, their opinions on current affairs were obviously the parrot repetitions of the club talk or newspaper statements. In fact, *they were as separate from India as I am at home in London*, and took their opinions of India in an even more second-hand way than I had taken mine before I ever set foot on Indian soil," wrote Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. ("Awakening in India," p. 261.) "A young man goes out from a London suburb to take up a clerkship in the I.C.S. He finds himself a member of a small ruling community; he has slavish servants to order about, *dark-skinned subordinates to whom it is right to be rude*," as Mr. Aldous Huxley aptly puts the situation. It is seldom that this "right" is not exercised! It is easy to bring in other quotations also on the same peculia-

rity. But I hope one has made the point clear.

In fairness to the English it may be admitted, that there are some noble missionaries and civilians and a few businessmen, who are blissfully free from this common arrogant attitude. All honour to them! *It is far from my intention to disparage in any way the meritorious achievements of the different classes of English residents here,* who have consciously and ungrudgingly given their best to the service of India. It would be sheer cussedness and rank ingratitude on the part of India, if she failed to acknowledge the deep debt of obligation to the many able civilians who were inspired by a high sense of duty; and to the zealous missionaries who sacrificed themselves for a noble cause — and their traditions are being maintained even now — or to the often bland, and sometimes bumptious, British businessmen who played a prominent part in opening up the rich resources of the country, benefitting themselves and others during the process. But, while there will be only a few cross-grained Indians who are disposed to withhold from the English the credit some of them richly deserved by their past labours in, and for India, — and whether it would be acknowledged or not depends mainly on the attitude of the English themselves; — it is also common fairness to point out some of the sad and unexpected results of their conduct which have conspired to detract from the value and attractiveness of their substantial contributions. It may be readily admitted further, that in a good many cases the English, as *individuals*, were hardly aware of, or responsible for, the wrong they were doing as a *community*. "There are some spirits, noble, just, unwarp'd by pelf or pride," says Eliza Cook. In India there were a

good many such among the English. As individuals most of them might be very lovable and attractive characters, — as many among them actually are, — and there is “nothing of the bear but his skin” about some of these English people. But as members of a community with its corporate outlook and interests, and its rigid conventions and past traditions which they dare not disobey, their contributions have been something entirely different and unfortunate. Some of the fair-minded among them would be the first to deplore these regrettable consequences, if only they were conscious of them. Naturalists say about the locusts that as isolated ones they are comparatively harmless, if not innocent, but that it is only when they become a mob that they devastatingly degenerate. “Men in community are mostly fools,” says Carlyle. If the preliminary obstacles to free social intercourse are broken down, a good proportion among the English are quite attractive in their behaviour and relations. But the trouble is to clear these preliminary obstacles. In the case of some of the English, the gates of their social gardens are always locked to the Indians. While the English people are only familiar with the sweet scent of the roses whose perfume permeated their exclusive tropical gardens, often they are utterly ignorant of the irritation which some of the Indian visitors suffer from the occasional pricks of the thorns. Along the warm sequestered vale of Anglo-Indian social life, they always keep the busy tenor of their racial way.

The subtle nature of the revolutionary change that slowly and imperceptibly creeps over the character and outlook of the ordinary Englishman just arrived in India, has not altogether escaped the pre-occupied

attention of some of the more discerning among them. All the same, there are very few English who are really familiar with the unfortunate nature of this racial geniture. "He has never learned that most difficult of all lessons for an Englishman, *the tolerance and understanding of the customs and mentality of India.*" That statement of Mr. Robert Byron may be said to sum up the reason for the *tragedy* of racial relations in India. It is very seldom that the deep traces of this early training are completely obliterated. The tender racial twig is easily bent just as the old people want it. The young Englishman, baffled by the strangeness of the physical and social environment, and the overwhelming character of the transition, and oppressed by a feeling of absolute novelty, soon slips into the old, safe, and benumbing groove, following the line of least resistance. He ponders over the words of wisdom and practical guidance given by the well-meaning and experienced elders. Such a method of approach to the social conditions also appeared to him the most convenient, the least exacting and troublesome, and the most flattering to his vanity and sense of "prestige." To depart unnecessarily from the rigid conventions of a close Anglo-Indian society in India must inevitably mean ploughing a useless and lonely social furrow; and fighting, often a losing battle, against the strong serried phalanx of patronage, power, position and prejudice. He is generally not on a philanthropic or humanitarian mission out here, but to shake the Pagoda Tree as vigorously as possible, though by constant and repeated shaking by succeeding generations a good many of the ripe fruits have disappeared, and new ones come with greater difficulty! Thus the honest doubts and misgivings and delicate

scruples which might have disturbed an Englishman at the beginning of his Indian career vanish in a surprisingly short time, and he becomes a "finished and finite clod, untroubled by a spark," as Browning puts it — except the *racial*.

It is one of the peculiarities of English conquest which has served to preserve the identity of the English from being merged in that of the country, that they have never entertained the idea of making India their permanent home. In this respect, there is a fundamental difference between English conquest and all the other ones. The Huns, and even the Mohammedans from the social point of view — the difficulty has arisen mainly over the religious adjustments — and other conquerors, were gradually absorbed by the exceptional assimilative power of Indian conditions. The English escaped a similar fate partly because their home base was so far, and the climate and environment were hardly such as to attract them unreservedly and completely.

The experienced people here have very little difficulty to break in the new colt and put him in racial harness. The racial traction of some of the older English residents in India is remarkable. Even if the new-comer is disposed to show some spirit and to strain the racial rope, he soon reaches the end of his tether, the unhealthy climate, "the weariness, the fever, and the fret," as Keats says in his "Ode to a Nightingale," of an equinoctial existence conspiring to render the process delightfully easy for the older generation. The fine English bird quickly moults in the tropics and puts on racial feathers.

The host who watches over the struggle, and guides his erring, unsteady steps through the racial labyrinth

in the tropics is, not infrequently, a weather-beaten, splenetic, Captain, with a ruling passion for oaths and for his pipe, and a pardonable weakness for whisky which makes him feel frisky in the otherwise dull Indian surroundings, and a touching devotion to his patronymic royal ancestor, George the Fourth. He may be sometimes a neuralgic or bilious Colonel with a saturnine temper, like the Reeve mentioned by Chaucer, "a splendre colerik man," the calorific value of whose temper varying in direct ratio to atmospheric pressure and outside temperature, with a remarkable affection for his dogs, but with hardly a thought for the Indian "under-dogs." Occasionally the host may be a Brobdingnagian bureaucrat, clean-shaven, spotlessly dressed, perhaps like the Devil in his Sunday best," as Southey puts it in "The Devil's Walk;" enslaved by routine, obsessed by prestige, who had been gradually, but thoroughly, disillusioned over the grand prospects he had previously conjured up of unbroken administrative triumphs, of listening to the admiring plaudits of his brown and ignorant subjects, — instead of which he hears the humming of the vicious mosquitoes — moving about in all his "majesty, dominion, and power," and it is doubtful if "Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these." It is also quite possible that the guest may be staying with a shrewd, profit-calculating, commercial entity, and though not an "incarnation of fat dividends" as the satirist puts it, at least, a personification of British business tact and ability, used to casting Platonic glances at the *purse* rather than the *person* of his Indian Zemindari customer, who has remained wholeheartedly true to his first preference for the English shop-girl amidst all the trials and difficulties threaten-



ing the course of his commercial love — which like the course of all true love had not run smooth, since it was challenged by the bold and insidious advances by the sable “swadeshi” rival. The young stranger may be perhaps enjoying the hospitality of one of the missionaries here, who has been encumbered by the language course, worried financially over the prospects of running his poor station, anxious about the health of his family, if it happens to be in India; whose once powerful citadel of religious belief had been steadily and relentlessly stormed and the outer defences carried, by an ill-assorted confederacy of irritating servants, mosquitoes, dyspepsia, and the scorching heat of the tropics; whose finer feelings threatened to follow the fate of the Seed mentioned in Christ’s Parable of the Sower, where the “cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches,” — in India it is often the anxiety of poverty — “choke the word and it becometh unfruitful,” who had passively added on the *racial creed* also to the Apostolic and Athanasian creeds. When the foreigner also happens to belong to the “subject race,” to a dark-skinned ethnic group, over whom he is expected or inclined to exercise lordship directly or indirectly, the chances of learning this hard, but invaluable lesson of racial charity under very hostile conditions, are further reduced. His insular traditions, and the imperial atmosphere at the Universities and public life, have conspired to render it difficult, if not impossible, for him to do that. The interests of the young Englishman till the moment of his reluctant departure for India would, in all probability, have centred exclusively in cricket or tennis or some of the other social amusements and girls. He must have been following with greater interest the

number of wickets taken by Verity, or the batting averages of Hammond, or the victories of Perry, and the number of goals scored in Cup Finals, than the number of people arrested in India for Civil Disobedience movement, or the number of people wounded in lathi charges and in other matters. What Macaulay said about the conditions during the last quarter of the 18th century is still true of the present situation. A broken head in Cold Baths Field attracts more attention than the large number of inferior pates broken in India in various ways! The Englishman might have managed casually to pick up a bit of the distorted and highly coloured information, of the well-spiced mental pabulum, cheaply and copiously provided by the efficient journalistic factory of Rothmere & Co., or watched the attractive Indian political fire-works of Churchill. But soon he finds himself "precipitated across France in the Boat Express, and spending a fortnight in the atmosphere of a cheery sea-side boarding-house before receiving his first bewildered impressions of India, from the Gothic spires and the lavatory bricks of Bombay." (Byron: "An Essay on India.") What strange impressions this historic gate-way of India temporarily or permanently leaves on the mind of the English visitor, it is rather hard to stay. He must certainly be perplexed by the novelty of the sudden, strange, and unexpected transition to, and contact with, Indian conditions. From Bombay or Madras, he soon proceeds to his appointed task in the interior, perhaps as a shop-assistant, or as an estate-manager, or as a newly polished glowing nut in the hot Indian "steel-frame." From the moment of his arrival in India he is "encircled by a racially exclusive society,

hedged in by restrictions and rigid conventions of its own making, into which no Indian hopes to enter." These social temples are as jealously guarded from the approach of the Indian "depressed classes" as those of the Hindus! In this provincial Anglo-Indian heaven in the tropics — most of them would be inclined to compare it more with the other place mentioned in the Bible, — in this English Valhalla, the harassed newcomer ceases from struggling and the confounded stranger is at rest. Those who had been in the country for sometime — and some of these are "men of little knowledge and great presumption," as Burke says in his "Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol" — take immediate and solicitous care of the perplexed member of the flock and see that he does not unnecessarily stray beyond the safe bounds of Anglo-Indian territory, urged on by any noble or mischievous curiosity, nor get himself lost in the various quicksands of Indian life. The shepherd's crook is ever ready to be used — very gently and unostentatiously though — to retain his erratic interests and attention in the "green pastures" and "still waters" of Anglo-Indian conventional life. The plastic racial clay is being rapidly moulded by the deft touch of the older potters according to their hearts' desire. The racial foetus develops quickly in the Anglo-Indian social womb. It very seldom happens — and it would be nothing short of a miracle if it did happen — that the young Englishman or woman succeeds in ridding himself or herself of all the deeply furrowed traces of this fateful period of early training. The Englishman just arrived in India soon puts forth the slender leaves of prestige and blossoms in the Anglo-Indian gardens and bears his blushing racial honours thick upon him, but like Wolsey he

seldom ventures beyond his depth in the sea of racial glory. There are many buoys to warn him of the dangers in this treacherous course. The genuine and unmistakable stamp of English society in India is indelibly set on him. Thus labelled and numbered in the racial factory he is quietly, and without delay, despatched to the interior stations. After the catechumens have picked up the essentials of the fairly elaborate racial creed, there is a hurried confirmation ceremony; and when the hasty initiation into the racial mysteries is over, the novices, still not at ease in their new atmosphere, are sent by their God-fathers to their respective out-stations with a passing benediction. The young men are exhorted to keep their racial banner flying, to remain true to their racial and national flags. "Make the might of Britons known. Britons! hold your own," says Tennyson. A similar exhortation is given to those who have gone through the course. Thus a few more coins are struck in the racial mint in India with their milled edges, correct proportions of alloy, their proper gloss and finish and exact metallic ring, and put into circulation finally. The racial inoculation carried out by the older residents against any contagion from a stay in India is extremely successful. The official or other duties of the English people might bring them often into contact with the people of the country, both in the cities and at the mofussil centres. But when the drab work of the dreary day is conscientiously discharged, when the weary routine is patiently gone through, when "day's dead sanctities," as Francis Thompson says,—administrative and public,—are decently worshipped or properly buried; the Englishman either plays games with his fellows,—and exercise is often made a

fetish of in the Indian conditions — or retires to his club, "to gossip or to drink" — the last being a "never-failing solace to the bored Englishman," according to Mr. Spear. ("The Nabobs.") "Athletics are a religion with the English," says Mr. Paul Cohen in his book "England the Unknown Isle." (Translated by Alan Harris.) That is well shown in Indian conditions also; for if there is one Deity to which almost every Englishman bows his willing knee in fervent devotion, that is the God of Exercise and Athletics. According to Mr. Jack Hobbs, the idol of cricketeers, "Cricket is a grand game for keeping you from getting a swollen head." But out in India, is this game powerful enough to counteract the racial swelling? Well, one has serious doubts on the matter.

It has been said of George III, that his affectionate nurse used to din into him daily the words:—"George, be King!" The tragedy that followed from an exaggerated sense of royal prerogative by the revolt of the American colonies is a matter of history. The unflagging efforts of the older generation of Englishmen to remind their wards of their central place in the Indian racial drama, to warn them of the disastrous consequences of mixing freely with the people of the land, of coming down from the racial heights, whereby they ran the serious danger of undermining their dignity and compromising their prestige, and weakening the foundations of their superiority, are seldom wasted. When the causes that would eventually lead to the disintegration of the British power in India come to be recorded by impartial historians later, it is not altogether presumptuous to say, that they would be prepared to assign the proper place to this powerful racial factor. It is not altogether unlikely that the

colour-freighted vessel of the British Empire may founder, when it does founder, on the breakers of racial intemperance in the East. If the Conservative skippers who have no Hamlet-like misgivings of their ability to guide the vessel in the supremely confident manner of Pitt, knew their business really well, they would try to steer clear of this racial whirlpool which threatens the safety of their boat in the Indian waters.

It is, of course, a very hard and *trying task* for an Englishman who comes to India for the first time, with "blank misgivings of a creature moving about in worlds not realised," as Tennyson would have it, who is called upon to keep up a constant and exacting fight against the debilitating effects of the Indian climate, and against other official, political, social, and family worries, to escape easily from the cramping spell, from the suicidal influence and fascination exerted by the Circe of racialism; to refuse to bow down to the false racial gods and idols worshipped by the majority of his countrymen in India. The political conditions are very unfavourable. The social environment is equally hostile. The Englishman is called upon to play a double part in India. Having slipped on the racial masque once, it becomes very embarrassing for him to cast it aside. By tradition and training he is not competent to act the double part. All these make heavy inroads on the Englishman's patience, politeness, and sense of fair play. The petty distractions of the home, the eternal servant problem, the anxiety about the health of his family in case it happens to be here, these and other worries absorb his attention, sour his temper, embitter his general outlook. He is thus seldom conscious of the peculiar and unnatural position in which he finds himself in this country through

directly no fault of his own, nor of the rapidly widening social gulf between himself and the Indians. His body and mind are unwilling and unable to assume a pretended ease amongst "unfamiliar people, of unfamiliar manners, interests and food." This is commonly the fate of the Englishman who comes to India for the first time. Similarly, the *English woman* who lands in India for the first time finds herself placed more or less in the condition of Ruth mentioned in the Old Testament. "Thou hast left thy father and mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come to a people which thou knewest not heretofore," says Boaz to Ruth. The strange and trying conditions under which the English who come to India "fresh from the Protoplast," as Browning says in "Abt Volger," — fresh from the racial and imperial Protoplast — are very well described by Mr. Byron. The Englishman generally moves about in a very narrow social groove in India, in a "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" environment. "To retire to his fellows is to take the line of least resistance. Also he is lonely. If he is to make friends, the society in which he lives," and moves and has his being, "demands a stern convention. And it is not conventional to seek the company of Indians for pleasure or leisure. Lastly, he finds himself in the position of a ruler with authority," — even though he may be an obscure apprentice in a small firm. This delicate and difficult position, even under normal conditions, would begin to atrophy his understanding of persons. The constant and oppressive consciousness of this fact makes it hard for him to meet the Indians on a footing of social equality. "So unless he is endowed beyond the common lot with curiosity and human sympathy," — which is rather *uncommon*, —

"and also with sufficient strength of character to sustain his compatriots' disapproval unmoved," and endure the taunts, the petty but exasperating persecutions of a parochial, pharisaical society, "he slides without resistance into a travesty of English provincial life whose doors close behind him for ever." (An Essay on India.) "The march of human mind is slow," says Burke. In India it is generally a funereal one in racial matters. It is this "Jekyll and Hyde" business (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" — the gripping novel of R. L. Stevenson), this exacting double or sometimes treble part which the Englishman is called upon to play on the Anglo-Indian stage, when he is unable to act even one part properly without constant prompting — a part rendered doubly difficult by the fact that he has neither the ability, inclination, patience, and training indispensable for such an exacting role, that is mainly responsible for the tragedy — though it began as a comedy first, which naturally follows. Thus, the English people in India slowly slip down the petty path of ethnic discrimination till most of them find themselves landed unescapably in the slough of racial aloofness and arrogance where a good many wallow complacently — in a few cases hardly aware of such a fact — and from where they seldom make any serious efforts to extricate themselves. The English corrugated metal being cast into the tropical furnace in the racial foundry, is converted into the proper size and thickness of a standard beam before it is fitted into the "steel-frame" or other kinds of "frames" in India. When the racial fledgelings are known to be in a condition to look after themselves, the old birds leave them for a season, and take under their protection and tutelage fresh arrivals. When the racial vulcaniza-



tion of one unit is over, the experts try others. Thus as the thin stream of English officials and businessmen and missionaries continues to trickle down, the racial irrigation experts dam up the flow, make the current sufficiently muddy, and then slowly release it through the rusty racial sluices to wet the vast Indian administrative and commercial fields. Just as certain varieties of cereals swell in size when boiled, so also the racial pride of a good many of the English dilates under the heat of the tropics. Generally, the palace cars of the Indian Rajahs are exempt from toll, at least in some of the Native States they are. Similarly, the racial "dustuk" or passport is found very convenient for purposes of travel and stay in India. Very few among the holders of such passports are inclined to forego their use, even though the date has expired and tolls have been abolished!

In the case of the vast majority of the English people in India it may be said without fear of contradiction, that they just slip on the racial over-coat in fashion then, which had been fitted out by their thoughtful and obliging sartorial experts. They just enter easily and naturally into the racial heritage of their forefathers. Perhaps some of them may feel a momentary discomfort, a slight choking sensation when they first try this new outfit meant for daily wear, which is considered as indispensable as a "butler" or a "boy" in the tropics! But after a few efforts, the early uneasiness is over and they easily slip it on, or rather do not care to take it off when once worn. The racial creeper grows on the Anglo-Indian trellis quickly and permanently, and it does not wither even under the most scorching heat of the tropics!

Thus the farcicality of western super-humanity

comes to be played daily at the expense of India's dignity and self-respect. This racial creed, glorified by its quaint ritual and its picturesque mummeries, has greatly outlived its original necessity. It has really degenerated into a harmful superstition, like some of the superstition for which India has become famous recently. "He fixed thee amidst this dance of plastic circumstance," says Browning in "Rabbi Ben Ezra." Well, whoever fixed the Englishman in the dance of racial circumstance in India, he does it with a vim! It is not unlikely, that on the first arrival of the Englishman in this country, his native instincts of fair play must have received a rude shock, and he must have been a bit puzzled, if not pained, with the nature of the social conditions prevailing in India. But after some time he loses all sense of the unnaturalness and injustice of the existing conditions. The early questionings of the "still small voice" cease to trouble him. As one of the English poets has said of sin and vice, we generally abhor and hate it when first seen, but after a few gradations of horror, pity, and tolerance, it ends in fond "embrace." But this racial situation has never been looked upon as offending the moral laws of the world, and the embraces started without the other stages!

What Shakespeare says about the peculiarity of human life in this world when he compared it with a play, may be very aptly applied to the Indian conditions.

"All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances;

And one man in his time plays several parts,

His acts being seven ages." ("As You Like It.")

In India, however, it never extends to that period in

the case of the English. Here a good many of the parts are played at the same time, in the same costume. The Englishman plays not merely the part of an ordinary citizen, of a member of a club, or of a political party, of an economic association, of a church, but he has also some mystic connections with the government. He is the government and the governed, and sometimes these functions do not harmonise well in India. "We touch heaven when we lay our hand on a human body! This sounds such like a mere flourish of rhetoric. But it is not so. If well meditated, it will turn out to be a scientific fact," observes Carlyle. But in India, a touch of the Indian — when there is actually one like that — seems to transport some of the English more often to the opposite place, just as it does in the case of the higher castes of the land. "Man hath given to mankind a common library, his creatures; and to every man an abridgement of all the others; if you read with understanding, it will make thee a great master of philosophy, and a true servant of the divine Author, if you but barely read, it will make thee thy own wise man, and the Author's fool," says an eminent thinker. In India, the Englishman seldom cares to open the brown volumes. He seems to be so much in love with his own abridgement! Some of the English soon after their landing in India are transformed like the late Lord Curzon, into a "superior person," as he used to be taunted by his college-mates during his undergraduate days at Oxford. Walking in the racial stilts they gain immensely in size, and like Gulliver they are disposed to look down on the Indian Lilliputians! Whether some of their friends who see them in the tropics would greet them in the same manner as Quince does Bottom when he sees

him with an ass-head:—"Bless thee! Bottom! bless thee, how art thou translated", is doubtful. The extremely humorous reply of the famous wit Curran may be applied to the case of some of the English in India. "Do you see anything ridiculous in the wig," asked a lawyer to Curran, "Nothing, but the head," came the reply. The same remark may be applied to the racial wig some of the English put on in the tropics!

How far it would be possible for an Englishman just arrived in the country to act up to the following advice given by one of his own countrymen is open to doubt. "It is better at first avoid mixing much with the natives, however well disposed one may be toward them." (A. C. Newcombe: "Village, Town, and Jungle Life in India"). This piece of advice and warning seems entirely *superfluous* now. "Their customs are so different from ours in many things, that it requires a rather long experience in India, to know what friendly advances are advisable. Our own English ideas would suggest visiting them at their houses, and inquiring after the members of their families, but he should only be giving offence in doing so. Their training and code of morals are different from ours, and their superstitions and ignorance of sanitation are such as existed among ourselves during the middle ages. Brahminism, caste, the seclusion of women, and many other Oriental impediments prevent much "mixing" of the native and the European. It is also quite true that there are defects in the European, especially with regard to his food and drink which add to the difficulty." (*Ibid.*) While there are some difficulties in the way of social intercourse, the greatest barrier arises from the *feeling of superio-*

rity which one party feels in the matter. All the others are secondary. Human society has been compared to many animate and inanimate objects to illustrate some of its characteristics. Herbert Spencer elaborated the idea of an organism. Some of the subsequent political writers have worked out this analogy to a grotesque extent. Sidney Webb compared it to a bee-hive where the little honey that is produced by the patient bees is generally enjoyed by "a few corpulent fellows at the top." It can be compared to an ant-hill where the industrious ants are working for the corporate benefit. But, when the German writer, Schopenhauer, compared social life to a group of porcupines whom a cold night brought temporarily together, but whom the subsequent warmth induced to spread their quills once more, it would be interesting to know, if this German critic was thinking of Indian conditions! That this philosophical cynic was not altogether unfamiliar with Indian conditions may be seen from the sardonic sneer in the usual arrogant way of the Prussian "Junkers" when he spoke of "300 bribed souls notable for their immorality as the result of Christian missionary enterprise in India!"

"The fundamental problem that challenges the distracted attention of the Englishman in India is not whether this attitude which has imperceptibly, and to a certain extent haphazardly, developed is *reasonable or not, but whether it is sufficient and justifiable*," asks Mr. Byron. The problem cannot be better stated. *Reasonable or not, under present conditions it is inadequate, nor is it altogether a normal attitude in the most self-determined Philistine.* "But the tragedy is that in the case of the average Englishman," — but

do average Englishmen come here? — "arriving in the country for the first time, every feature of the life and society into which he is thrown conspires to stultify that novelty from the beginning, and to blunt his natural interest in the country and sympathy with its people. How far the process is complete depends on the nature of his work. Anyhow the conspiracy is made, and in the majority of cases is perfectly successful," and the experienced "conspirators" add one more recruit to the club. This admirably vivid and realistic account of the process of change — often of deterioration — given by one of the members of the "regent" class, is astonishingly true. Thus it would appear that even some of the English people in India are realising the peculiarities of their social behaviour which generally escape the attention of the busy Englishmen, distracted with their official, business, or private worries. But most of them seldom see all the peculiarities of their social behaviour, and outsiders are often in a better position to note them.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Manifestation of the spirit among the different classes—continued*

The manner in which this feeling of racial superiority manifests itself among the different classes of Domiciled or non-Domiciled English residents in India — the civilians, the missionaries, the commercial men, the planters, and other classes; the geographical peculiarities in its exhibition, the local variations in its appearance; how it is more in evidence in clubs and railway stations and other places of public thoroughfare — and locomotion has apparently some close connections with racial dynamics; and the *agoraphobia* or the morbid dread of public places, is quite an amusing feature of English social life in India; — how the feeling of superiority temporarily vanishes when enjoying the lavish hospitality of an Indian Rajah or Zemindar, — and the mystic connections of racialism with riches have not been sufficiently investigated, — how a new-comer seems to possess it only in a limited degree, but how a short and vigorous period of apprenticeship under the roof of one of the old seasoned residents manages to reproduce all the interesting symptoms of this racial peculiarity; these and other things connected with the problem are interesting subjects for further study. But it is hardly possible to deal with all of them within the compass of this work. Similarly, how this glossy armour of racial superiority is consistently worn during the day

time, but during the nights how it is occasionally cast aside by some in the presidency cities particularly, "where if the communities of rulers and ruled have learned to pass their days in a state of mutual exclusiveness the same cannot be said of their nights," — as Mr. Robert Byron says in his book "An Essay on India," — "and Indian mistresses, in a country where white prostitutes are few and white bachelors many and vigorous, are of necessity tolerated by that lynx-eyed society," as the same English writer (Mr. Byron) puts it, — how the Eurasian community which came into existence as a result of such illicit connections is being treated by the English—these and other facts,— some of them rather stubborn and a bit unpleasant — have to be explained satisfactorily away, before the people of India can be persuaded to subscribe to the orthodox and powerful creed of racial superiority which the Britisher nevertheless aggressively or passively holds here. But a detailed discussion of these and other delicate matters has been deliberately avoided in this book, since it is not possible to refer to them without giving pointed expression to one's views, arrived at as a result of the study of the historical materials available for the period, and sitting in judgment on the character, motives, and conduct of the different classes of English residents here, which is *not* the main business of this work. All the same, they have vital and direct connections with the whole racial problem. For, the Indian finds on careful investigation many vulnerable joints in this racial armoury, a good many blemishes in this "white unsullied escutcheon of English morality." A few references would be pardoned by the readers, since without bringing in them it is not possible to illustrate



some of the peculiarities in the manifestation of the racial spirit. It is sometimes amusing to watch the racial antiphon as it is sung by the different members of the English congregation, particularly in the hill-temples of India. "Man was born for thinking and acting," said Cicero. Whether it is that some of the English people have finished the process of thinking by the time they come to India, they certainly do the racial acting very well, sometimes quite creditably, as if their "whole vocation were endless imitation"! "I am convinced," says Mrs. Walter Tibbits in her book "The Voice of the Orient," "and all my Indian friends will agree with me that the unrest among the educated classes," — though according to some of the English politicians, the educated classes are not truly representative of the country — "*is caused chiefly by the race prejudice, the personal rudeness and contempt shown by the "white people"* — everything about them is "white" including the "paper" that was recently issued on Indian constitutional matters! — "*in railway trains and other places of contact and not by any sense of government injustice.*" ("The Voice of the Orient.") With remarkable insight, this English lady has placed her fingers just at the correct spot, and it is hardly possible to express the whole situation in more appropriate terms. In the vast majority of cases, the feeling of bitterness on the part of the Indians, had its origin in the deliberately insulting language and treatment of some of the prominent Indian politicians or other gentlemen by one of the obscure, vigorous, and rude members of the ruling race. This sense of humiliation may be traced to the thoughtless arrogance, the offensive behaviour, the insulting language, used by a member of the "heaven

born" — an admirable counterpart of the Indian "twice-born" Brahmin! The iron had entered deeply into the soul of the Indian thus ill-treated, and from that day forwards he and his friends became uncompromising foes of western impudence, displayed not by the really able and the responsible among them, but by the rude, and uncultured, *who had evidently only this cutaneous qualification to boast about.* But the mischief had been done, and while the Englishman probably went away with a feeling of satisfaction that he had asserted the dignity of Her Britannic Majesty, and showed the presumptuous Indian who put on such airs before him his real place, what he had actually succeeded in doing was to create an unrelenting enemy who from that date had vowed to do his best to undermine the foundations of this citadel of arrogance. The irrational article of this creed of ethnic excellence, of this gospel of superiority, of this sacrosanct social faith, are held in varying degrees of tenacity and firmness by the different English residents in India. But it is the unrefined and the uncultured among the English who are the most firm and orthodox believers in this creed. They also display it in the most offensive manner.

About the cultural qualifications of these "superior" persons, Mrs. Tibbits has some interesting comments. "There are many worlds in Simla. The noisiest is that circle of men and women who have no higher ideal in life than to win a prize in a "bumpie puppy" "to be seen speaking to a Vicerene, or to have an A.D.C. as an attaché." The rude and insulting manner in which some of them behave towards Indian passengers is too well known to be mentioned here. But one incident which this lady writer has brought

in may be quoted. A certain Indian judge who had paid the full first class fare was travelling when two European passengers also got in. These new arrivals objected to travelling with the "native," who had paid the Company the full fare, whereas the Englishmen who had only paid the second class fare were actually travelling first class, and yet they objected to travelling with the Indian Judge! Such examples were not by any means uncommon in the past, and one can mention a few others from one's personal observation and experience. At present there is a marked decline in the number of such irritating incidents. This is however not due to any change in the mentality of the English residents. Far from that. It is mainly because of the *changes* in the facilities and *means of communication* and travel. As a result of the popularity and convenience of the motor car, few English people travel by train. Further, some of the European passengers go in first class, when they do take the train, and thus obviate the necessity for any unwelcome contact in the second class in which the vast majority of well-to-do Indians travel. It is quite possible that with the progressive cheapening of the *air route*, the English residents may adopt that alternative which would completely eliminate all possibilities of clash on the lower plane! But the redeeming feature of all such ugly incidents is that this repulsive feeling oozes out not so much from the really *cultivated* among the English people, but from those who have inherited the minimum refinement with the maximum national and racial prejudice, from some of the small and insignificant feelers of the racial centipede. It is not an exaggeration to state that the present national movement has received not a little of

its encouragement from the casual and thoughtless provocation given by some obscure Englishmen, who regarded it as their duty to their country to uphold its prestige in India by behaving in this rude manner! "Oh Liberty! Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name," exclaimed Madame Roland. One may say similarly, "Oh Prestige! what mischiefs are being done in thy name!" It is one of the cruel ironies of the Indian situation that before the Moloch of Prestige the English people in India blindly sacrifice some of their most attractive national virtues, taking refuge under the complacent delusion that thereby they have vindicated their national honour in this country! In actual experience they have only succeeded in exasperating the Indians. "It is wonderful how much talent runs into manners," said Emerson. "In India it is wonderful to see how much of manners run away from talents! It was quite a common and an amusing thing to see a few years ago a very ridiculous distinction made by the Railway authorities in the classification of passengers, besides the ordinary one into first, second, and third. "European Gentlemen," and "Indian Men" used to stare one on the platforms. It was not even "English Gentlemen," but "European Gentlemen!" The other day a very eminent authority in Indian history gave me a short account of the genesis of that unique classification. It would appear that in previous years in the nineteenth century, it used to be "Gentlemen" and "Indians," the implication being that no "Indian" can be a "gentleman"! Once, the grandfather of the late Chief Justice of Madras, Sir Kumaraswamy Sastri, who was a very prominent officer in the Madras Service, proceeded from Madras to Arkonam. He got into the first class compartment.

When the train stopped at Arkonam, he went to the first class waiting room and was having a wash. The station-master objected saying that it was a breach of the rules since the first class waiting rooms were meant for "Gentlemen." The Indian officer from Madras protested that he was "gentleman" and as such entitled to the use of the bath-room. The station-master would not take his assurance on the matter and it was decided to refer the question to the headquarters. Mr. Sastri sent a telegram to the Agent, for a ruling on the point. "Please wire if I a gentleman." The Agent was out of the station, and the station-master at the Central Station—a European—decided to settle the matter himself. He wired back, "If you are not a gentleman, who is?" From that time forwards they changed it into "European Gentlemen" and "Indian Men." But one feels that the last of this racial comedy has not been heard. The farce will be complete only when one finds "Indian Gentlemen" and "Europeans" on the notice board! "That horrible and meaningless word gentleman is used only when a candidate seeks parliamentary honours," said the late Lord Dewar once. That may be so in England, but in India it used to be as much a lavatory honour! It is a very significant fact however, that the Railway Companies in India depend for their earnings and profits on the money obtained from the third class mere "Indian men," and that the earnings secured from the superior patronage of the eminent "European Gentlemen" constitute a very negligible, an infinitesimal part of their total annual earnings! But it is a very eloquent comment on the nature of the outlook of the English community. "Our manners, our civilisation, and all the good things

connected with manners and civilisation have in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles: I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion," said Burke. It would be interesting to find out on what they rest in the *Asiatic countries*! "A gentleman's first characteristic is that of fineness of structure in the body which renders it capable of the most delicate sensations, and of structure in the mind which renders it capable of the most delicate sympathies; one may simply say fineness of nature," said Ruskin. In the tropical conditions, the most delicate "revulsions" are being manifested in the matter of colour. "A Christian is God Almighty's gentleman; a gentleman, in the vulgar superficial way of understanding the word, is the devil's Christian," observed Mr. Hare. But what about an Indian? "A gentleman is rarer thing than some think for. Which of us can point out such in this circle — men whose aims are generous, whose truth is constant and elevated; who can look honestly in the face, with an equal manual sympathy for the great and the small. We all know a hundred whose coats are well made, and a score who have excellent manners: but of gentlemen how many? Let us take a little scrap of paper and each make out his list," said Thackeray. If such a list were made in India by the English it would be interesting to find how many Indians would find a place in it besides themselves! It would be worth while for some of the magazines to start competition like that! "The Prince of Darkness is a Gentleman," said the poet Suckling. (Sir John Suckling, 1609-1642.) When Shakespeare wrote of the glories of humanity, some of the modern race of Englishmen in India were yet unborn. "What a piece of work is

man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God! Yes. In racial *apprehension* how like a God!

The racial hauteur of the English in India is a feature one comes across in certain localities to a greater extent than in others, in a larger measure in some groups than in others. The racial voltage is higher in the mechanism of some classes and residents than in others. It is among the planting community in India, among the buskined Englishmen in the estates and plantations, that this attitude of racial pride and superiority finds its typical expression. Whether it is because that a good many among them cannot claim the same degree of culture and refinement as the other professions in India or whether they are the unhappy victims of their narrow environment and work, where they come into daily contact with the poor half-clad "coolies" and other Indian blackamoors who wait with "bated breath and whispering humbleness" before their Lord and master, whom some of the English planters regard as typical of Indian manhood or womanhood; or because they are cut off from all refining contacts with their own countrymen and the more cultured class of Indians, it is difficult to say. But such a healthy contact would have served partly to restrain the eccentricities of their racial orbit, and provided a strong counterblast to the aggressive and ever-present consciousness of racial superiority. The planters seem to enjoy the ambrosia of undiluted racialism in the tropics, to taste more of the pure manna of racial superiority. The fullest and most unrestrained scope for the free display of racial excellence is provided in the higher altitudes of the different

"estates" and plantations, where the actors "dress'd in a brief little authority" play a few fantastic tricks before low Indians and high Heaven, which make some of the ordinary inferior Indians laugh, whether they make the Angels weep or not! One of the common and amusing exercises besides riding, boxing, tennis, etc., which some of the English people regularly take in the tropics to keep themselves fit in body and mind, is the racial callisthenics of "leap-frogging" in which the stooping part is always played by the Indians! But the racial performances of some of the civil and military players in the hot plains, pale into insignificance before the superior exhibition of some of the planting acrobats who hibernate in the higher altitudes. "They will be like the centaurs of old, for as the centaurs were half-men and half-horses, so will these be half-men and half-motors, and for such a race the natural sustenance will be alcohol," says Mr. Douglas Woodruff in his amusing work "Plato's American Republic," referring to the nature of the life in American social circles. It would be interesting to hear from this writer what is the peculiarity of some of the English residents in India. Conceit may be according to Hazlitt "the most contemptible and one of the most odious qualities in the world. It is vanity driven from all other shifts and forced to appeal to itself for admiration." But among some of the English people in India at least, it sits with an excellent grace. The racial pride of some of the English planters and of others reminds one of a certain scene in "Purgatorio" described by Dante.

"Christians and proud! O poor wretched ones  
That, feeble in the mind's eye, lean your trust  
Upon unstead perverseness: know ye not



That we are worms, yet made at last to form  
The winged insect, imp'd with angel plumes,  
That to Heaven's justice unobstructed soars?  
Why buoy ye up aloft your unfledged souls?  
Abortive then and shapeless ye remain  
Like the untimely embryo of a worm."

("Purgatorio." Canto X, lines 108-117).

The "winged insect" mentioned in the above lines is the butterfly which was an ancient and well-known symbol of the human souls. In the Indian plantations it is a fitting symbol of the body also.

The Nambudiris — the aristocratic landlords of Malabar — used to shout "ha! ha!" in the past whenever they walked through the streets as a warning to the depressed classes, to the "pariahs" and other low castes, of their sacred presence and to keep out of their way. Some of the Christian planters are not far behind the Hindu Nambudiris. The old caste system among the Nambudiris and other classes of Hindus has disappeared or is rapidly disappearing, and if these people who regard themselves as high castes want to escape pollution, they have to remain at a safe distance. What about the English planting Nambudiris? Will they suffer the same fate?

An incident which happened in one of the plantations in Travancore, which is typical of many others that take place all over India, would serve to bring home to the readers the enormity of the whole thing. A rich and influential Indian planter had to go on some professional matter to a neighbouring "estate" managed by an English gentleman. The Indian was clad in his usual native South Indian dress, in "dhoti," and he had the common country foot-wear — a kind of sandals used among the well-to-do. The English

"boss" was on his daily morning rounds, after his usual "peg," when he happened to see the Indian coming towards him accompanied by the head-clerk of the place. Amazed at the audacity of the Indian who had dared to appear in his august presence without removing his foot-wear, the English planter ordered first his head-clerk to ask the stranger first to remove his "sandals"! It is amusing to note, that the Indian planter had a bank balance that would have stirred the envy of the Englishman, and which he would have spent all his life in trying to get with precious little chance of success. This estate "Nabob," like Satan in Milton's "Paradise Lost" seated "high on a throne of royal state," must have been sufficiently familiar with Indian social customs and usages, though moving in high altitudes with a frequent week-end trip to the nearest town which claimed the honour of a bar or other meretricious attractions, to know, that in the presence of Indian Rajahs, or while inside a temple or a mosque, no Indian would put on his foot-wear. Hence it was an act of unpardonable insolence, if not sacrilege, to tread the premises rendered sacred by his racial effulgence, in that heterodox style. Such instances are not by any means isolated. "Heaven's gates are not so highly arched as King's palaces; they that enter there must go upon their knees," said Daniel Webster. Those that approach the English racial temples in India must sometimes go bare-footed! The conduct of some of these reminds one of the description given by Dryden in his poem "Alexander's Feast."

"The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,  
A present deity, they shout around:

. . . . .  
With ravished ears,

The monarch hears,  
Assumes the god,  
Affects to nod,

And seems to shake the spheres."

Some of them do seem to shake the planting spheres! "Be fair to the Devil," goes an old saying, or to put it in other words "Be fair to the people whom you think you do not like," said Albert E. Couch in "Every-day Psychology" (U.S.A.). One is not particularly anxious to place the conduct of the planters and others in an unfavourable light. It is easy to give a fairly large number of such ludicrous instances. Perhaps some of the *people in England* may find it hard even to believe them. Is not the caste system that some of the English follow as deplorable as the caste system that the most orthodox, the most presumptuous, of modern Brahmins follow?

A rather amusing experience happened to me at one of the English clubs in Madras. A purely private matter took me to this place. With spacious grounds all tastefully laid out, beautified by excellent lawns and flowering trees and plants, containing attractive varieties of crotons, fitted up with all the comforts and luxuries that art could provide, money command, and ingenuity suggest, the whole scene presented a lovely and delightful appearance. I had proceeded just a few yards along one of the main entrances which led to the residential quarters situated about 100 yards away, when I was stopped by the gate-keeper. He, evidently in obedience to previous orders, objected to my going in with an *open umbrella*. I was in "European dress" minus the hat. Rains were not altogether uncommon in the afternoons during that part of the year, though on this

particular day the sun was blazing hot. With me there was an ordinary umbrella which I had taken as a protection against the sun, and against the eventuality of rain. In compliance with the peremptory orders of the brown Cerberus, I closed the umbrella and walked in. While the rule appeared at first quite harmless, highly amusing, and a bit ridiculous, later on when I thought over it, it struck me that the rule had a more serious implication. The umbrella is usually, if not exclusively, used by the Indians. The English ladies, it is true, have their umbrellas in fine and sometimes fantastic colours and designs, which some of them appear to treat as a nice ornamental accessory, designed to match the colour of their hat or dress or facial tints, and to heighten the general appearance of attractiveness. Mine was a "swadeshi" one. How the sight of a harmless umbrella would agitate the delicate optic nerves of the inmates of the hotel, used to more unattractive scenes daily, was more than I could understand then and since. It is quite possible that I may be mistaken and uncharitable in my interpretation of the incident. But when it is viewed with the many other conventions and practices that some of these exclusive clubs and hotels maintain, there is very little chance of going wrong in one's conclusions. Of course, every institution has got its own right to draw up rules to regulate its domestic management and economy. Dogs are not allowed in some places. Smoking is prohibited in others. I instinctively recalled the familiar lines in the hymn of the poet, who, describing the natural scenery of Ceylon remarked, where "every prospect pleases and only man is vile." It may be mentioned in passing that the common talk of the neighbourhood was of the occasional appearance of the figures

of brown and white ladies, who could be seen flitting across the nocturnal shadows in that racial bachelor sanctuary! "Man is physically as well as metaphysically a thing of shreds and patches, borrowed unequally from good and bad ancestors, a misfit from the start," says Emerson. But a good many of the English people in India behave as if they were cut of one single splendid racial piece! "The club is the corrective to individualism, a compromise between private life and community life in the form of a carefully sifted community of like minds," says the author of "England the Unknown Isle." Perhaps that is the reason why most of the English clubs are so exclusive. They want a community of people with a like mind, and also a like *colour*!

How colour obsession comes to blur the vision of the otherwise normal vision of English residents was clearly revealed by another incident which happened at Elliot's Beach, Madras, the popular bathing resort of Europeans, which was reported in the "Indian Express," one of the Madras dailies. The sense of "chivalry" of the English is a much advertised commodity. Shakespeare speaks in "Richard II," of "Christian service and true chivalry," for which the English character was famous throughout the world. Three Indian ladies went to this bathing resort recently. After their bath one of the ladies approached an "English Gentleman" who was sitting outside, and asked for permission to make use of one of the bathrooms. The Englishman turned round and asked:—"Are you an Indian?" Such a question from a healthy person sounds quite strange, and seems rather to suggest, that this particular individual was still suffering from the effects of a vigorous devotional morning exer-

cise at the shrine of Bacchus, and that his eye sight had not regained its normal powers! When the Indian lady answered "Yes," this highly chivalrous gentleman remarked:—"Then you cannot have the bath-rooms." If an Indian does not give his seat to a European lady unasked, he is accused of unchivalrous conduct. If an Englishman refuses an Indian lady's request that is chivalry! The incident reminds one of a "howler" which was given while a school boy was defining chivalry. "Chivalry is when one feels cold" said the pupil. But in India it is when an Englishman like the above-mentioned person, feels a bit hot towards an Indian lady! According to Lord John Russell, chivalry "is the essence of virtue." In India the conditions are however quite different. The bathing appurtenances of some of the English residents are lined with racial stuff, and the walls of their bath rooms adorned by a white wainscoating! "The age of chivalry is gone" says Burke, but it has been succeeded in India by one of racial revelry!

It is perhaps among the ranks of the soldiers that one comes across the comparative absence of this feeling of eminence arising from a virulent consciousness of ethnic superiority, from a feeling of a cutaneous prerogative. Whether it is that they have a better appreciation of the real values of life, undisturbed by the many artificialities and delusive conventions of modern civilised life, or whether it arises from the long traditions of their profession, or from their economic conditions, which prevent them from assuming a superior tone, — whatever the reason, the fact is more or less obvious. While the English civilians and other residents are fearful of an unsparing, lynx-eyed, society's disapproval, and are more careful and secretive

in their movements and behaviour, the English soldiers are utterly indifferent to such delicate considerations. They very seldom attempt to throw a veil of secrecy over their conduct. "Poverty makes strange bed-fellows" in India too! It is a very common sight to see some of them mixing very freely with the crowd in city centres in the evenings; and "when night darkens the streets," as Milton says in "Paradise Lost," then wander forth some of the sons of Mars, sprung from the hardy Anglo-Saxon stock, in quest of some excitement or recreation in the cinemas or other channels which the cities hold out to relieve the languid monotony of their barrack life. It is interesting to watch them in their steady, almost mechanical military gait — though some of them seem to be none the worse for a short spree on their pay day or at other times. How far the attitude is prevalent among the sailors with their "sweethearts in the different ports" including the Indian ones, the writer is not in a position to say. But some of them may be seen paying a fleeting visit to the poorer Eurasian quarters in big cities during their brief stay in harbour.

When class distinctions have taken deep root among the different ranks and professions of the English residents themselves, it is not a matter for surprise that they have extended the scope of their manifestation to the Indians also. In the past, the civil and military sections did not get on as a "happy family." "The military and civilians do not generally get on very well together. There is a good deal of very foolish envy and jealousy between them, and they are often down-right ill-bred to each other, though in general the civilians behave much the better of the two," wrote the author of "Letters by a

Lady," who refers to the conditions which prevailed during the early decades of the nineteenth century. "One day an officer who was dining here said to me, Now, I know very well, Mrs. — you despise us all from the bottom of your heart. You think no one worth speaking to in reality, but the civil service. Whatever people may really be, you just class them as civil and military — civil and military, and you know no other distinction. Is it not so?" I could not resist saying "No, I sometimes class them as civil and uncivil." ("Letters by a Lady".) To the Indians however both classes seem to be equally "civil"!

The relations which prevailed among the different classes of English residents in India remind one of a certain incident which has been reported about an Eurasian Police Band. This police band mainly composed of Roman Catholic Eurasians had played at an entertainment more or less connected with the purposes of the Protestant Church. The Roman Catholic priest protested against the step and the band master received it in good humour promising to abide by the wishes of the priest. Later on the priest himself wanted the services of the band for his church. The band master assented so far as the bandsmen were concerned. But he said thoughtfully, "I fear that the instruments bought mainly with money supplied by Protestants are decidedly protestant in tone. You can have the men, of course, but I fear that I can scarcely sanction the use of the instruments"! This incident is fairly illustrative of the spirit which marked the relations between the different sections of the English population in the past, though about the conditions at present one is not in a position to say anything definite.



"We shall have missed the boat by a few months or years, just as we did in 1909 with the Morley-Minto Reforms, and in 1919 when Dyarchy was introduced with the shadow of Amritsar lengthening over the land," wrote once Mr. G. T. Garratt in the "New Statesman and Nation." While the English politicians seem to have developed excellently the curious habit of missing the political boats that leave periodically for India, the English inhabitants have seldom missed the racial train when once they land here. The racial "superiority complex," of the English appears to be not so much a congenital malformation as an *acquired eccentricity* in the Indian conditions. It is quite amusing to watch the startling growth and unfolding of this attitude in India. If a naturalist wants to know the real character and habits of any specimen in which he is interested, he must watch its life and developments in its native haunts and natural surroundings. The native haunts of the "Domiciled" or "Non-Domiciled" European community in India may be said to be some of the few fine hill-stations in the Himalayan slopes or in the Western Ghats, in the Nilgiris and at other similar spots.

Mrs. Walter Tibbits in her book, "The Voice of the Orient," gives an excellent description of the glorious back-ground where the social and racial drama is being regularly enacted every year. "Surely never elsewhere was any circle of hills the amphitheatre of so many dramas from real life, never was a more effective setting for the spectacle which men and women play. More beautiful than any drop scene by the greatest stage artist of Simla in spring and like a drop scene almost unreal in its exquisite daintiness." It would require the literary talents of the author of "The Rape

of the Lock," or of "Childe Harold," to describe adequately the nature of the social comedy performed there. "The snows are the background of course," says this lady writer, — in excellent conformity with the white pigment of the players — "but distant and sugary in their sweetness as in the setting of a toy scene, or in the pretty landscape of a French bon-bon box, not near and grand and majestic as at Darjeeling, where one becomes part of their life, rejoicing in their sparkling gladness, under the bright sunbeams, shivering with them when the gloomy grey mist enshrouds them."

"Then in the foreground the lovely colour scheme of the delicate cloud of pink peach blossom, palpitating on its brown leafless branches against the cobalt sky, making a fit frame for a fair woman's face, and exquisite as a scene of a Watteau fan," — (from the painting of Antoine Watteau 1684-1721) "in its dainty painting, or again gladdening the sombre depths of a background of dark deodars, standing sentinel-like on the khud. Never were rich and pale pink in so daring and successful contrast as in Nature's masterpieces, nowhere else for the eye which can see them are such banquets of delight. . . . . Near the coign of vantage from where one views the toy snow scene is the fashionable photographer's shop, where society ladies make pictures even more unreal in carefully posed attitudes." Such is the exquisite environment, the beautiful surroundings, the ethereal setting, where the "cream" of English society in India spends its summer.

While such is the nature of the stage where the summer variety entertainment takes place, this European lady writer also gives some interesting touches

of the nature and attainments and behaviour of the characters and of the play. "The tongue is the most potent weapon known in Simla" as in most of the other social centres. "Woman's tongue is her sword, which she never lets rust," said Madame Necker. Some of them whet it in these hill stations for use the rest of the year. "It is indeed mightier than the sword," continues Mrs. Walter Tibbits, "and the fear of society guts the firmest foundations of morals. Most men who step unflinchingly up to the cannon's mouth walk warily before the eagle eye of the Simla dowagers. Women, who brave the plague and cholera horrors cheerfully, squirm in terror of the tongues of society crones," of superior English ladies who turn up their nose in utter contempt at the incessant chatter and gossip of their brown sisters! — "of the foul slanders given birth over tea-tables, and which have usually as much foundations as the vapour from the tea-kettle spout." It would appear from this book that for some of the ladies scandal-mongering is a favourite trade. "Similar scandal is no respecter of persons, it stalks like a hideous hydra-headed monster, naked and unashamed seeking whom it may devour, amongst the smiling ranks of society, and nobody knows who will be the next victim to its insatiable maw. . . . . At the close of this gay carnival when the poor moths fluttering round the lamp of pleasure," — when the gay-plumaged girls of fashion migrate from their summer quarters to their cages in the plains, — "the fashionable abodes present a desolate appearance, the staggering coolies bearing on their backs cruelly heavy packs, but none heavier than the weights borne by many a human heart at the season's wane. No hill in the world sees the dawn and decay of so many

human hopes as the Himalayan hills of Simla. Oh! the girls I have seen arrive, bright-eyed, fresh and eager, at the dawning of the season, their smiles and their dresses, fresh from home; to leave at the end, with faces dull and dead of hope, disappointed, disillusioned, to descend the hill too often into the inferno of an enforced solitude! The men who come to Simla with bright hopes of a career above the ordinary, who have seen their dreams slowly fade, as they sank to the level of the club gossip and the "peg" of forgetfulness; the women who have left Simla with lives never to run in their old untroubled courses again!"

"Simla in the autumn might indeed stand as the representation of the faded hopes of India!" — or rather the faded glory of Anglo-Indian society — "and the jackals' weird cry at night as they howl round the khud is not more desolate than the cry of men and women who sink down the hill disheartened, to the wild plains beneath." ("The Voice of the Orient".) How far the above description given by an English woman of the social experiences of her countrymen and women is true of the conditions existing there, I am not in a position to say positively. But it must be more or less true in the main outlines. It would have been a happy thing for them, and still more happy for the people of India, if some of these people had never come down again to the Indian plains, to "the dreary intercourse of daily life," as Wordsworth says, with the people of India.

"Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray  
And fiercely shed intolerable day,  
as Goldsmith puts it in "The Deserted Village," would never have troubled them again, and tried their temper. They could have pursued their social and busi-

ness activities in a delightful atmosphere where "equinotical fervours" do not glow. They could decide

"In the hollow Lotus-land to live and lie reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless of  
mankind,"

as Tennyson describes. Like "The Lotus-eaters," deaf to the "lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong. . . . chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil," they could live in superior isolation. Some of the English find their resting place, the "C. Major of this life," as Browning would have it — only on the Indian Hills. It would have been a happy thing for both parties, if some of these racial players had never got down from the hills, if they had always continued their social and racial variety entertainment in these high places. Peter said to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Master it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles." So also it would have been a "good" thing not only for them, but for the others also, since there would have been fewer causes of offence, fewer chances for friction and bitterness. It is only when some of these people get down from the hills that they somehow manage to come into violent and rude contact with the people of the plains. Like the "sanyasis" and other Hindu hermits who are supposed to live in the Himalayan slopes wrapped up apparently in their spiritual exercises, so the English actors could have better continued in their superior ethnic heights abandoning themselves to their social enjoyments.

It would be interesting to know whether Miss Mayo had occasion to come across some of these specimens during the course of her Indian experiences. Or did the "drainage inspectress" examine only the social

sewage of the Indian plains? Evidently, she did not have a good sniff at these exalted ones. Perhaps the smell emanating from these sources was quite familiar to her, being but a very poor and feeble reproduction of what she had in her native country. But the smell of the drains in the Indian plains was something new, exhilarating and utterly different to what she was familiar with; and that she relished immensely the change, and that it improved wonderfully her powers of smell-and indirectly sharpened those of others also is evident from her books!

## CHAPTER XV

### *Manifestation among the different classes—contd.*

In this extravagant exhibition of colour bias, in such a frequent and irrational display of comic aversion to the brown or dark Indian skin, in this ephemeral irradiation of western caste splendour, in the mirth-provoking betrayal of cutaneous prejudices, there are amusing differences arising from local variations, as well as from the eccentricities of the different individual players and professional groups. In the loud and oft-repeated racial "community-singing" in the Indian plains where an exclusively western musical programme is often gone through—the Indian airs being as unfamiliar and unattractive to the English as the western ones are generally to the majority of the Indians—the bass is contributed by the lusty-throated soldiers, the tenor by the impeccable civilians, the alto by the commercial classes and sometimes also by the missionaries, the soprano by the fashionable ladies, while the baton is wielded by different people at different times, and the grand diapason is generally attained at the "hill stations."

But it is "in the Presidency Capitals, at Government House, behind the scenes of rigid yet clownish formality—clownish in that it is maintained for the benefit of the English than for the Indians," as Mr. Byron says in his book, "An Essay on India," that the spirit bursts out in all its meridian splendour. One cannot do better than quote the words of this

English writer. "Pseudo-royalties like royalties, are apt to collect or be supplied with a retinue of lick-spittles, whose lesser effulgence attracts the adulation of a close society; for it's through them alone that the greater effulgence could be approached. A bulgarian habit of mind develops that delights to play on the snobberies of the snobbish, and contrives to render the court of the King's representatives tawdry and absurd by such utterances as that of a certain military secretary who told an admiring dinner party that what he loved was "the pomp of it all" — although pomp and ostentatious display, according to English writers, are the monopoly of the Indian Rajahs and of the Orientals in general! "In such an atmosphere," continues this English writer, "the outward life of the Governor descends to a mummery before a small English audience" — a highly appreciative audience too — "at the expense of the Indian tax-payer. That he should live magnificently and dispense a superb hospitality is both proper and beneficial," but the writer takes care to add a qualifying clause, that "unless these activities are directed primarily towards the entertainment of Indians, they become vulgarised and cannot justify themselves financially." ("An Essay on India.") The Indians however manage to derive some entertainment by watching the show from a respectable distance and reading accounts of the grand parties held there, reports of which appear the next day in the newspapers. While the delighted Englishmen call the popular tune of this administrative and racial extravaganza, performed at the different provincial amphitheatres in a style true to the Roman proconsular traditions in the hey-day of Rome's glory it is the poor Indian tax-paying goose, whose feathers



have been plucked so closely in some of the famine-stricken areas that a good deal of squealing is audible to the Indian ears, that pays the merry piper. Pomp and display is no respecter of time, place or person. When the proclamation of Queen Victoria's assumption of the new dignity of Sovereign of India was made with due solemnity in an Imperial Assemblage, when all the Native Princes were present at a grand Durbar for which millions of rupees were spent, the lands in the Deccan and Southern Presidency were being devastated by a famine. "The total area affected was estimated at 257,000 square miles, with a population of more than fifty-eight millions. The excess mortality in British India alone was supposed to exceed five millions, exclusive of the immense number of deaths in the Native States," says Dr. Vincent Smith. ("Oxford History," p. 749.)

The sense of racial superiority is however an extremely variable factor depending like the weather on many external considerations. The speed of the racial vehicle as it dashes along the different parts of the country is by no means uniform, and it is governed not merely by the nature of the roads, but also by the peculiarities in the make of the different types of mechanism and the whimsicalities of the drivers. For instance, an Englishman completely forgets all such oppressive consciousness at the courts of the Indian Rajahs or the mansions of the Zemindars, when he is on one of his hunting excursions. "In their own palaces and at Government House balls the Indian royalties are permitted to dance with white women, to clasp their waists. . . . Whether the English women find the royal duskiness less revolting than the common vulgar variety, I could

never discover," says very humorously Mr. Byron. It is an amusing fact however, that a good many of their Indian subjects have found at times the mental colour, the moral complexion, the intellectual integument of some of the Indian Rajahs less attractive than their brown or black pigment generally set off by gold or diamond and other precious jewellery, which has always exercised a mesmeric influence on the human mind. Though it was to preserve the sacred English womanhood from the contamination of a vile contact with the Indian, that the fiction of racial superiority was *first* bolstered up — it is a hard and veritable fact now — that womanhood seems to stand, to tolerate, the strain of a contact with the Indian Rajahs and Zemindars! "Mammon finds his way where seraphs despair!"

That colour prejudice is governed by geographical and political and financial considerations seems obvious from the following words of an English writer: "It is possible to notice Indians of both sexes dancing in London ball-rooms without observing any expression of strained nausea on the face of their white partners." There the presence of a few "dark" faces serves only to add to the attractiveness of the whole scene by its picturesque variety! "And I know one American lady from the southern States, fortress of colour prejudice against the negroes, who hid under a bed for half an hour with a most distinguished Moslem in India," — who that distinguished Indian is, it is not very difficult for the Indians to guess — "during a game of sardines and is still alive!" ("Essay on India.") In India also it is not an uncommon sight at present to watch the English people fraternising with the well-to-do Indian gentlemen and even ladies during such events as the

Races — one of the indirect, beneficial developments of western connections. The conclusion is fairly unavoidable, that there is a good deal of irritating artificiality, and in some cases, hypocrisy, about the racial mummeries and the pretended alarm for the safety of white womanhood in India. It would be interesting to ask and find out how many cases of insult to the "white womanhood" have happened in India with its millions of population for the last so many years! The racial outlook of the English people here appears to be capable of drawing many subtle distinctions, and some of them seem to have been greatly benefitted by contact with the Indian who is often accused of his subtlety. Thus the feeling of racial eminence which the English exhibit in this land is so exquisitely regulated as to suit time, place, circumstances, and personalities; and they manage cleverly without any strain to stretch it on the Procrustean bed of their fanciful convenience in a manner which defies analysis and baffles the bewildered Indian understanding. The racial attitude is quite tensile and can be conveniently expanded.

"Avarice, envy, pride,  
Three fatal sparks have set the heart of all  
On fire," says Dante in "Divine Comedy."

(Canto vi).

In India it is mainly *pride*. An unconscious spirit of religious pharisaism, and a conscious one of political domination, a feeling of ethnic arrogance, cultural phillistinism and intellectual presumption, an attitude of physical excellence, a firm belief in imperial traditions and mission, the philosophy of economic superiority and pride, of cutaneous distinctions and splendour, a feeling of contempt for the "subject" races, all these

doctrines and prejudices in varying degrees and at different places and times have furnished reinforcements — strong or slender as the case may be — to this stagnant but capacious reservoir of racial arrogance. In course of time however, some of the old tributaries have suffered inevitably from a gradual process of drying up in the hot atmosphere, and only the old channels betray the course in which the former current had flowed in the past. With the increase in the political temperature the other passages also will dry up. Burke once called the world, not without some truth, the "Bedlam of the Universe." India may be said to be the central spot in this asylum, for one finds not merely different native *caste* constellations moving in their own separate orbits, but the *western caste system* also on top — but all revolving more or less in concentric circles!

There is also another curious reaction of this racial situation on the social outlook of the English people in India. "The social subservience of the English communities conspires to encourage the governors to over-estimate the value of personal dignity," says an English writer. While towards the people of India there is an attitude of supercilious contempt, towards the Government, both in its impersonal and personal, individual and corporate capacities, the tone of the English residents is one of unquestioned admiration, uncritical submission, unqualified approval, extreme respect, which in the case of some even verge on sycophancy. It was remarked of a certain English minister that in the royal presence he was meek as a lamb, and outside as valiant as a lion. Some of the English residents have generally accepted this convenient philosophy, perhaps unconsciously. Whether there is any

connection between the two attitudes, whether in proportion as the submission towards the Government and the Anglo-Indian ruling aristocracy increases the contempt towards the Indian also increases in a corresponding degree, in a direct ratio, is a matter which admits of no easy answer. But one cannot help suspecting a mystic connection under the circumstances.

That Mr. Garratt (I.C.S. ret'd.), has not over-drawn the picture in the following lines is obvious to all who know something about Indian conditions: "The trouble lies to a great extent in the artificial and pretentious life to the larger stations. Most Western nations have ceased to take what the Americans call "this king business" very seriously, and it was a thousand pities that India, which has always suffered from too much of it, should have fallen into the *power of those English upper middle classes who retain such a fondness for it.*" So, this love of display, is not the fault of the crude, unrefined, Indians only! "The setting of false standards begins with the Viceroy," it would be interesting to follow what would have happened if Mr. Garratt had made these observations while he was in India in service! — "and the wasteful extravagance of his two palaces and two seats of government. It spreads rapidly to the Provincial Governors with their ludicrous travesty of royal pomp and procedure. It fastens like a blight upon the higher officials and the chief military officers." ("An Indian Commentary," pp. 107-8.) Speaking of the qualifications of a Viceroy, John Bright once said:—"He knows nothings of these nations and he has not a glimmer of the grammar or pronunciation or meaning of these languages. He knows nothing of the country or the people. He is surrounded by an official

circle, he breathes an official air, and everything is dim and dark beyond it. . . . . I do not know at this moment, and never have known, a man competent to govern India."

Some of the ways in which the sense of prestige is kept up among the different ranks of the English residents in India are amusing to watch. It may be seen in the style of dress adopted in the different places. "The absence of freedom is frightening," says Mr. Byron. "Only those who have worn a stiff collar in Bengal September," and Madras June — "can realize the full improbability of this national eccentricity. As I sat those dinners out," — in spotless "boiled" shirts, "with sweat dripping down my writs, my spirit adhering ghostly tentacles to my belly, and cold streams of perspiration coursing down my spine, I used to laugh softly to myself as one laughs in a nightmare, that one knows to be true despite the reality of its horrors, and to wonder a Papuan aboriginal indulging in an orgy of self-mutilation," or an Indian ascetic, naked, famished, ash-strewn, unkempt, absorbed in his religious exercises, who is often pitied by the foreigner, — "were not more sensible, if not more comfortable beings." ("An Essay on India.") But such is the blind homage paid to the Golden Calf of Prestige, that "to enter a cinema without a dinner jacket when the temperature stood at 100° is to invite a disapproving cynosure." The story is told of the departmental head of a large English business at Calcutta who was sent for by his manager and reprimanded for having been noticed after dark in day clothes!

There is another interlude in this social and racial comedy. Fashions in evening dress vary with the locality. "In Karachi," says Mr. Byron, "an all-white

suit may be worn with a black cummerbund," — an Anglo-Indian word for a sash or waist-belt, derived apparently from the Persian "kamarband" meaning a loin-band; "in Calcutta, a black coat with white trousers; in Bombay a white coat with black trousers; in Madras a black coat with white trousers. For a traveller, these variations involve an unusually large wardrobe. The degree of rigidity that governs office dress is also alarmingly inconvenient, though in recent years there is an occasional tendency to sacrifice dignity to comfort," — the Englishman feels that he has made enough sacrifices in the past and that he is entitled to the fruits at present—"and to appear in office in shirts and trousers." (Byron.) Whether this is indirectly the result of the dress reform campaign which was in fashion in England, particularly among the women while playing games like Tennis, when they appeared in "shorts," and how far this is going to be continued in India, are matters on which an utter Indian stranger has no business or authority to pronounce an opinion. To what extent the efficiency of any establishment would be enhanced or decreased by a meticulous adherence to strict sartorial conventions or by a departure from them has not been calculated. Here there seems to be some scope for a "retrenchment committee" to work!

Equally typical of "our national incapability of self-adaptation, are the hours of business kept, identical with those in England," says the same English writer, Mr. Byron. Though the body might writhe, the spirit appears to be partly mollified. "In Europe, all southern populations, are at work in the cool of the dawn, sleep at mid-day and work again till dusk. The Englishman in India true to the eighteenth century

traditions of beef-stick and mugs of claret in a temperature of 120 degrees, arrives in his office in a sweat and continues to sweat," and often to fret and sometimes to fume, "till it begins to be cool enough to work properly, when he promptly leaves again." (An Essay on India.) But is this curious arrangement, this peculiar procedure, based on such stupidity as appears on a superficial view? Is it merely the fortuitous combination of unexpected administrative circumstances? Is it merely an official accident? It does not look like it on a more deeper analysis of the situation. The Englishman is a strict economist who knows his business well. Some of the Indians are said to live in eternity! But the Englishman "acts in the living present" as the Poet would say. He is not likely to waste his time unnecessarily. It would not be altogether unfair to say that this arrangement was first introduced and subsequently kept up with a view to secure the best parts of the evening hours and morning hours for exercise and recreation, for games and outdoor amusements, which are more important to keep them in a fit condition in the tropics, than all the devotion at their counter or to their account books, or the interminable and threatening mounds of office files. It may be said with equal truth of the Englishman as of John Gilpin's wife, that "though on pleasure bent she had a frugal mind." While the Englishman is anxious to keep up and to impress upon others the dignity of his regent functions, he is at the same time desirous of exacting the last ounce of pleasure from his dry and hot husks of Indian business and administrative life. It is not implied in this that the English people sacrifice their business to pleasure. That would be wrong and unfair. Most of them lead a very hard



and strenuous life in the tropics. It is only suggested that they know how to make the maximum advantage of their position and to reconcile the demands of public and private activities.

In justice to the English people in India it must be admitted that the hostile natural surroundings, the intolerable heat of the sultry plains, the mosquitoes and other physical discomforts of a life of exile in the tropics, which all the many conveniences of modern life have only partly served to alleviate; the constant moving about in an unfamiliar atmosphere with a fear of unwarily treading on the tender Indian corns, the separation from home and other things, have been responsible for the unfavourable reaction on, or the mild perversion of, *an otherwise agreeable nature*. The English people are naturally not so demonstrative as some of the other European nations, and they prefer generally to remain at a respectable distance from free and familiar contact with foreigners. In India this social and national peculiarity is greatly aggravated by the other accidental circumstances as the fact that they are members of a ruling race, with the sad result that some of their finer feelings and emotions become gradually atrophied. In many cases the tender social seed could not break through the hard physical crust.

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the sinister and decisive part played by the debilitating Indian *climate* in this social tragedy. The English have often to fight against heavy odds in the burning Indian clime, as they pass through life's fever in the flaming plains with an occasional delirium in the case of some. It is not in the least surprising that a good many of them preferred to give up the social fight rather than continue in the difficult and apparently unprofitable

course of cultivating an attitude of friendship and understanding with the Indians. It has been remarked that the mosquitoes contributed partly to the decline of the mighty Roman Empire. It was the malaria which devastated the marshy plains of Italy that led to the physical deterioration of the Romans and thus to their eventual inability to resist the barbarian hordes. Of course there were other causes also. Similarly, one of the powerful reasons which has so far prevented the possibilities of any friendly approach, besides the political and economic, the cultural and the religious cleavages, was this purely *physical* one which operated with great force during the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, and which placed an almost unbridgeable gulf in the path of free intercourse with the people of the land. After the hard and trying work of the day in the Indian Tartarus, the Englishman or Englishwoman is seldom in a mood, physically and mentally, to throw himself or herself freely into the company of a strange people, separated from them in all the aspects of social life with which they have been familiar in the West, in their dress, appearance, deportment and manners, diet, habits and standards of life. This was a constant ordeal for most of them, and naturally they found that after some time, when the feeling of novelty had worn off, when the early good resolutions began to evaporate literally and metaphorically in the grim realities of a fiery climate, they found themselves less and less inclined to keep up the fight. The task of maintaining and improving a good understanding with Indians appeared to grow more and more difficult as time passed by. The best thing, most of them considered, was to keep at a safe distance. The Indians naturally think that the attitude

has grown up as a result of their pride, of their consciousness of belonging to a ruling race. But that has got directly very little to do with this psychic transformation. Often it has arisen in the case of those whose idealism has not evaporated in the tropics, from a feeling of sheer exhaustion involved in the constant struggle to understand a foreign mentality and foreign customs and ways of life. Since they have many individual and social and business ills to suffer in India, they do not want to "fly to others they know not of".

Having moved with the missionaries for more than ten years, and with some of them very intimately, one can say with a certain degree of confidence—it is quite likely one may be mistaken—that in a good many cases the attitude of aloofness was just an attitude of *self-defence*, and not an aggressive one,—of course there are some exceptions—and that it is because of the fact that they have not been sufficiently acclimatized in the Indian conditions, either physically or mentally, that most of them prefer to withdraw into their own inner chambers, mental and social. They are satisfied with a safe, though limited, social contact with those of their own race. The cultivation of a free social intercourse with Indians is beset with many difficulties, and most of them do not find the time nor possess the aptitude for such a task. Often the odds prove too strong for the new-comer. His early idealism is not powerful enough to resist the repeated attacks from the combination of unfavourable circumstances, and so he slips back into the old and comparatively comfortable groove wherein his predecessors walked warily and more or less safely. In some cases the process is swift. In others the

transition is more gradual. But in the end the result in the majority of cases is the same. In this process, the older residents, perhaps unconsciously, and with the best of intentions, in order to minimise the sufferings of the stranger, to render his steps firm and sure in the strange and slippery places, hasten the decision. Thus it comes about that in the overwhelming majority of cases, the Englishmen or women had to submit to the pressure of unfriendly circumstances. Just as in the case of the seed mentioned in the Parable of the Sower which fell on different kinds of grounds and proved useless, so also the social seed is soon choked by the business pre-occupations, individual fancies and idiosyncracies, by the unfavourable climate and environment of the English residents. It does not mean that the English people suddenly adopt an air of superiority. The transition is not so startling. But the *effort to understand the point of view or the sentiments of the Indians becomes more fitful and feeble*, and in the end there is a complete mental alienation between the two parties, although to all outward appearances the breach is unnoticeable. They still appear to move in the same friendly way, but the heart is not in it. A wall of separation had been slowly rising. The two parties are hardly aware of the growing estrangement. Then comes some small incident which serves to show the way in which the racial wind is blowing. Perhaps it may be a vital question of some general principle about the treatment given to a particular class of employees in service, or it may be a general problem of missionary policy in India, or some matters connected with English administration here, or a trifling technical detail about leave, allowances, etc. Occasions are not wanting anyway, and the two

parties find to their mortification and surprise that the slender bridge of understanding and friendship that early enthusiasm and good resolutions had built up so laboriously, was not strong enough to support the weight, now that the racial and other "impedimenta" had also to be carried through the same fragile causeway. Then comes the rift that by and by makes the social and racial music mute. "I am best when least in company," says the Duke in "Twelfth Night." Well, the English people, at least some of them, begin to feel that they are not at their best in the Indians' company. On both sides the development was not at all premeditated. The former spirit of trust and understanding is finally replaced by one of suspicion and misunderstanding. To make matters worse, some of the missionaries unconsciously imitate the fashion prevalent among the commercial and civilian classes, and expect an unquestioned submission to all that they say or do. The Indian claiming a more intimate knowledge of the local needs and conditions, and anxious, at least some of them — to assert their equality, to get rid of their "inferiority complex" with a vengeance, goes a bit far under the circumstances. The Englishman used to, or certainly expecting, submissiveness and docility from the Indian is pained and surprised at the developments and begins to accuse the Indian of ingratitude and of insolence. The charge is met with the counter-charge of the Englishman's pride and egotism, and thus the tragic separation grows apace. Each party tries to shift the blame on to the other. The Indian loses his point generally in the end, for, if the Englishman were to lose his, the Indian stands a good chance of "*losing*" his job, since it is one of the common articles in the creed of Prestige,

"Thou shalt never acknowledge thyself in the wrong." This missionary and bureaucratic infallibility in the tropics is as powerful and ruthless as its Papal counterpart. The message of Christianity, the message of love and charity, when poured into some of the missionary vessels which were cast in the same imperial mould as that of the civilians and of the businessmen, has been disturbed in the course of transmission, the nature of the change depending on the character of the vessels through which it was transmitted. Notions of prestige and imperial ideals and racial prejudices inconsistent with the true message of Christianity, false ideals of class and ethnic pride unconsciously imported into their professions and conduct, have often marred the tenor of the private relations of the missionaries with the Indians, and also their approach to the general questions of wider missionary policy in India. There is very little room for surprise that some of the missionaries find it rather difficult to rise above the common level of their countrymen, with whom they have so many interests in common, to escape from the cramping fetters of prestige and false tradition. Most of the Indians, it is true, continue to show some respect to their spiritual and intellectual god-fathers, but in general the relations are far from being what they ought to be. *When the relations with the missionaries, who often honestly strive to get over their racial and other prejudices end in this disastrous manner, it is not necessary to deal in detail with the nature of the relations and dealings with the civilians and other classes and professions among the English in India, who are seldom animated or sustained by any such high principles and motives in their conduct, nor actuated by any constant desire to understand and*

respect Indian sentiments. "The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?" asks Francis Thompson in "The Hound of Heaven."

If there is one thing in my humble opinion which has placed the most serious obstacles in the way of the progress of Christianity in India and other parts of Asia, it is the *corporate conduct* of the Western Christian nations, the organized policy of the European powers, which has been in utter opposition to the teachings of Christ. The Christian message is not likely to be appealing or effective as long as it continues to come through the racial megaphone, as long as it bound to the chariot wheels of economic and political imperialism. It will not be considered presumptuous on my part if I were to remind some of the missionaries that even though they may give all their goods to feed the Indian poor, physically and intellectually and spiritually, that though they give their body to be burned in this Indian climate, and have not charity — racial charity, national charity — in their corporate outlook, it profiteth them little. We pray very regularly "Thy Kingdom Come" in the Lord's Prayer. But do some of the Western Christians follow the implications in that petition? If so, they will not be guilty of such an unchristian attitude. In a good many cases, Christ's kingdom is delayed among other reasons by the *racial kingdom* which already exists, and which cannot be easily overthrown. There is no intention here to judge from superior heights the conduct of the missionaries. No. Far from that. I have neither the desire, nor the ability, nor the right to do it. I have only admiration for their sacrifices, respect for their convictions. But at the same time, I cannot help feeling that they have not

altogether escaped from the spell of racialism, being exposed to its subtle temptations in various ways. But to the extent they have fallen victims to this creed, they have wandered from the ideals set by Christ. Their position is not an easy one now and it is wrong to pass any rash judgments without taking into consideration the nature of the difficulties they have to overcome. Already the position of the missionaries is a very trying one and I shall not be guilty of making it worse by any remarks of mine. The criticisms given above have proceeded from the one desire to see the conditions changed for the better.

In a letter written by C. F. Andrews to one of his friends recently and published in the "Visva-Barati," *this race problem* — particularly among the missionaries, — has been well discussed. "*The race question*," observed Mr. Andrews, "*is the most pressing one of our age.*" It is also the most pressing and ominous one in India. "In a few generations we may come to a rigid caste system not for one country only but for the whole world. On the other hand it may be broken down at the outset before it has gained full possession. I have had two experiences with regard to it. The past was my *missionary* experience. But there has been profound disappointment. *The sense of patronage, of possession, of dominance, is so strong in the societies which send out men and women to preach the gospel of the lowly Christ that race pride grows and battens on missionary ardour and is not checked by it, except here and there, among the few.*" After discussing the other method of treatment of the problem, "the direct attack, the controversial method," as Mr. Andrews himself calls it, he says:—"So I have got this new experience. I cannot be a



missionary of the old type. That has gone for ever and you have delivered me from that bondage. I feel now after all this bitter experience that it is only by *religious changes in mankind*, realized by the young and taught to the new age, that these old hatreds are to be overcome; and I see that those religious changes must come, not through party or sect or dogma, not through the old conventional Christianity I professed, but through something deeper and fuller of the love of God, something wider than my old ideas and more pervasive and penetrating than my old path of action."

This is one of the best comments on the racial problem in India, while it is also a serious challenge to the usual attitude of the missionaries and their methods and outlook. The sentiments which I have been feeling so deeply have been expressed by Mr. Andrews in such a clear, effective, and simple manner that it is unnecessary for me to expand it further. Would that there were a few more missionaries of the type of Mr. Andrews! Then Christianity would not be viewed in the light in which it is being done now in Eastern countries. I had occasion to hear of a very amusing instance of the manner in which racial prejudice warps the outlook of the English. This happened in the case of a lady missionary. A certain lady graduate from South India went to one of the Scotch Universities for "higher studies." She made a few good friends in her college. On one occasion one of her Scotch lady acquaintances insisted on her going out for a walk through the streets of Edinburgh, arm in arm. Later on, they happened to meet at one of the educational institutions of Madras. It would sound almost incredible when it is said, that this lady would hardly recognise the Indian! Sir Walter Scott

remarks in his novel "Surgeon's Daughter," that some of the English passengers during their voyage to India "left their conscience at the Cape and forgot to take it back" when they returned. Similarly, some of the English people also seem to lose their *memory* and charity when once they round the Cape. Evidently, the result of sunstroke! It would be interesting to know from where and how this lady managed to contract the germs of the racial measles. It is very seldom that such people succeed in removing the traces of the attack from their mental and moral complexion. Those who behave in this manner are guilty of betraying their Master, Jesus Christ, whose message of love and charity they are come to teach here! I remember one of my old Professors saying during the course of one of his sermons, wherein he was describing the conduct of Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed Jesus Christ to the Jews, that he "had the decency to hang himself!"

It is also rather sad to think of some of the methods adopted by a few of the missionaries and mission bodies to raise funds in England and America. In order to enlist the financial support of the public in these countries, the people who collect money sometimes indulge in all kinds of wild statements and half-truths, which are as bad as falsehoods, which leave a very erroneous and prejudiced impression on the western public mind. They are not often deliberate falsehoods, but they are exaggerations, mild or gross misrepresentations of existing conditions, and not far removed from the class of lies. Some of them preach charity in public. But their conduct is removed from this high ideal. They become, perhaps unconsciously, powerful accomplices of the enemies of India. It

comes with a bad grace from an Indian Christian to make these remarks about the behaviour of some of the missionaries. But no useful purpose will be served by glossing over hard facts. "Moreover, Christians will not do any real service to their cause by attempting to minimise the failures of Christian missionaries in the past in these respects. The enthusiasm, devotion, and self-sacrifice, which have ennobled the Christian missionary enterprise throughout its story, and even the personal affection shown by missionaries towards their fellow-men of all kinds, *should not blind us to the serious lack of fairness, courtesy, and understanding*, which have all-too often characterised missionary literature, preaching and propaganda, in its dealings with the non-Christian faiths. A reaction against it is not only inevitable, but *desirable*, and in the long run the Christian Church itself will benefit thereby." ("The Case for Missions in Modern India," Rev. E. C. Dewick, pp. 13-14.) In the case of some of the missionaries, it is not inappropriate to bring in the situation which Shakespeare mentions in "The Merchant of Venice" for purposes of comparison. The struggle that goes on between racial prejudice and Christian principles, reminds one about the words of Launcelot Gobbo in "The Merchant of Venice." Gobbo is seen arguing with himself about the propriety of deserting his master. "Well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not says my conscience." "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well; fiend," say I, "you counsel well." (Act III, Sc. ii.) Not infrequently, the struggle ends as it ended with Gobbo. "The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command, I will run."

When the struggle is between *prestige and racial prejudice* on the one hand, and Christian principles on the other, — though the issue is not often fought out in that clear and glaring fashion, it is not always that the victory comes to the latter. Often the struggle goes on in an intermittent and lethargic manner for sometime. I shall be lacking in charity if the fact is not acknowledged that even now some of the best friendships I have formed are with some of the missionaries, and that there are a good many among them whose conduct as *individuals* leaves very little to be desired. But how far the *corporate* policy and conduct of the missionaries have been inspired and marked by that spirit of racial charitableness of which the apostle Paul speaks so beautifully in the "Epistle to the Corinthians" — of which the English must have heard frequently in their churches, — by that charity "which beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, which "doth not behave itself unseemly, is not puffed up," — an attitude which is often evident in their individual conduct, except in the case of a few imperialists, one is not definitely in a position to say, nor does the scope of the present work demand such an investigation, and in "*charity*" it is better not to investigate too much. The general result of some of the dealings and relations and administrative adjustments in the past between the missionaries and those in their service, or with the Indian laymen outside, may be summed up in the words of Thomas Hood, the comic poet.

"When we debate, it is my fate  
To always have the wrong of it;  
For I am small, and she is tall  
And that's the short and long of it."

The sense contained in those humorous lines may

be applied in general to the way in which the other matters and questions in India, like the political, the economic, the military, the administrative, and the religious, came to be decided from time to time. In the *commercial bouts* in the past India might have been in the right, but she had to fight with all her might—even then it often ended in defeat—to gain her point. In the *military duel*, India may not be in the wrong, but England is strong, and the dispute did not last long, and the results may be gathered from history. In the *political tug-of-war*, the big, burly Anglo-Saxon team used to pull her over the mark without any effort or strain since in the past one end of the rope used to be fastened to the loop at Westminster. In the *economic relay-race* she had to start under a heavy handicap with the well-trained favourites of London and Manchester. In the exchange struggle of the silver rupee, of the “pale drudge” between Indian and Indian, and the golden sterling, “hard food for Midas,” it might have been hard for Midas—it was the latter that invariably won the day. In the *cultural competition* India used to be invariably placed far below the English in rank, very much below the place she really deserved, since most of the judges were utterly ignorant of the merits,—sometimes an indispensable qualification for judging!—of her standards and performances, which defect was made up by an unshaken faith in the superiority of English standards. Esculapius—the Greek God of healing and the patron of Western medicine—would not condescend to note the very existence of the indigenous “Ayurvedic” systems which had flourished here long ago before its western rival was even born. In the *racial struggle* she had no

chances at all. She has been disqualified because of her black pigment from the very start. In the *industrial competition* the looms of Manchester put India's out of use in the past.

The all-pervading part played by the perspiratory climate, and the overpowering thermic reaction on the racial outlook of the English have not been sufficiently understood or emphasised by Indian and English writers. Its connections have not been even suspected by many of the English in India. It is an interesting study, *this racial thermo-dynamics*, the subtle relation between Indian heat and racial developments. It may be said without exaggeration that the climatic conditions have been greatly responsible for the mis- chief from the beginning. This was one of the external factors which perverted the situation. It may be an indirect factor, but all the same, its sinister influence was often decisive. The English people in India found it difficult to stand the devastating effects of the climate when most of the devices which mitigate the heat, and make life tolerable, and occasionally enjoyable, at present here, were utterly unknown or absent before. The "punkah" which had been displaced by the electric fan, was the invention of a distracted English "writer"! In this "overpowering land of cloudless sun" as the author of "Ode to a Punkah" wrote, under the influence of an unsparing, fiery, tropical sun, it was not easy for the Englishmen during the course of the nineteenth century, and in many cases even now, to put up with the discomforts of an Indian life with equanimity. Their temper used to be tried very severely by the climate. It was more than what most of them could do to cultivate a calm and philosophic attitude which would tolerate the strange presence of

the Indians in their social circles. The heat during certain months of the year was such that "only the Prophet who went to Heaven in a chariot of fire could stand the climate," as Mark Twain remarks of one of the Italian cities. "The old Cameronian spirit began to rise in me," says Scott in "Surgeon's Daughter," — the Indian novel which deals with the reign of Tippoo. With the rapid rise in temperature, not only the blood of the Cameronians, but of the Saxons, of the followers of the different patron saints — of St. George, St. Patrick, and St. Andrew — all registered a corresponding rise. Macaulay and many other writers have vividly portrayed the trials and hardships of an Indian climate. The difficulties arising from the hot climate were aggravated by the failure to adjust the diet and drinks and style of living to the physical conditions among the earlier residents. During the Great War, one of the English soldiers serving in Mesopotamia described the conditions there in the hot weather as follows:—"Hell is the hill station for it." The same sentiment is expressed in another humorous way in an incident which is said to have happened at Masulipatam. This was at the time when the English were having a precarious foothold on the settlement during the first half of the seventeenth century. The following description of the appearance of the place would interest modern readers and might enable one to understand also the humour of the incident. "By the muddy sea lies the ruins of an old fort." "It stood," says an early writer, "on a patch of dry ground surrounded by a swamp, which no living creature but a Dutchman, a frog, or an alligator would choose for a habitation." ("Masulipatam Consultations.") The uncomplimentary reference to the Dutch would be

intelligible if only one knew a little of the bitter commercial rivalry between the two Protestant countries during the early years of the seventeenth century, resulting sometimes in such incidents as the "Massacre of Amboyna." "The fort is surrounded by a broad ditch filled with a few feet of water and several putrid feet of mud, into which the tide ebbs and flows, the mud at low water exhaling pestilential vapours. So great has been the mortality that the surgeon has requested the Colonel to let the dead be buried quietly without music or firing." Such is the place where the following incident is said to have taken place. A very "*wicked*" soldier had died in the cantonment, and had been buried with due military honours. That night the neighbour of the now empty cot of the late deceased was awakened by a hoarse appeal which seemed to come from the sepulchral depths:—"Send me, down me, the blankets. Will yer? I am fair perished down here!" Such was the contemporary view of Indian climate. Perhaps some of the English may be inclined to compare the conditions in India with the "fiery furnace" into which Nebuchadnazzar threw the three Jews, Shadrach, Mesach, and Abednago! Dante seems to have been familiar with the heat of the Indian climate, for he speaks of "the torrid Indian clime." (Canto xiv. Cary's translation.) Whether the English found like the great poet not merely the flowers and the verdure of the Indian vegetation, but also the *face and figure of the Indians* as described in the following lines which give the conditions in the seventh circle in Hell, one is not in a position to say.

" . . . . . not verdant there

The foliage, but of dusky hue."

"It destroys one's nerves to be amiable every day



to the same human being," said Lord Beaconsfield. The same reason which explains the cause of so many divorces at present, was responsible from the psychological point of view in India for the widening of the racial gulf. *It is hardly possible to exaggerate the sinister part played by the hot climate in this racial tragedy.* Next to the political factor, this one may be said to be the most devastating and influential. Many passages from the works of English writers can be reproduced to show how decisive was the influence of this agent. But lack of space compels me to give up the attempt. "In this world a man must be either an anvil or a hammer," says Longfellow. In the torrid Indian clime, in this Anglo-Indian Avernus, the English generally preferred the latter part. The racial sparks that fly about, as a result of the contact between the English racial hammer and the Indian social anvil, may be seen even now by those who have eyes to see. Although the English discovered some appliances like the "Punkah" to reduce the heat, no thermantidote to cool the *racial air* has been so far discovered!

Besides the all-pervasive effect of the hot Indian climate which placed serious difficulties in the way of social intercourse and better understanding, which made heavy inroads on the feeble armour of courtesy, there was also another important consideration which prevented the growth of friendships. This was the *pride* of the Englishman. This pride was fed by different streams in India. There was the military stream, there was the cultural tributary, and also the religious one. But more important than all, there was the one arising from the fundamental difference in external appearance, the one arising from the variations in the colour of the skin. "In general, pride is at the bottom

of all great mistakes," says Ruskin. It has provided the inspiration for Indian conditions. "The pride that dines on vanity and sups on contempt," as B. Franklin so aptly says, found a good deal to satisfy its voracious appetite in India. It got constant nourishment and there was no occasion to complain of *famine conditions* at any time here.

"Of all the causes that conspire to blind  
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,  
What the weak head with the strongest bias rules,  
Is *pride*, the never-failing *vice of fools*,"

says Pope. In India it was seldom the "never-failing vice of fools." It was the "never-failing" folly of sober, level-headed people. "Pride is a vice not only dreadfully mischievous in human society, but perhaps of all others the most insuperable bar to real inward improvement," says Mrs. Carter. Whether it has perverted the inward improvement of the English at all or not, it has certainly stunted their *external capacity for friendship* with the Indian. "It is pride which has filled the world with so much harshness and severity." The Indian world also is suffering from the pride of the English and the pride of the higher castes in India. "I believe the first test of a truly great man is humility," said Ruskin. But there are few among the English disposed to support their illustrious countrymen in this opinion. Dr. Johnson might say of pride that it "is a vice, which inclined every man to find in others and to overlook in himself."

It is a very delicate matter, and perhaps in some cases also *unfair*, to assign this fault to the English in India. In the case of some of the English people it was just the unfamiliarity with Indian conditions that was chiefly responsible for the perpetuation of the

barriers of ignorance, for closing the doors of friendship and understanding. They may also point out the pride of the Brahmin, who refuses to mix with the people of lower castes and classes; the pride of the Zemindar, and of the other communities of the land. At the same time, some of the fair-minded among them would admit that this peculiarity, this social evil, has induced them not infrequently—the pride arising from the consciousness of belonging to a ruling race, the pride of their past achievements, the pride of their cultural heritage, the pride which despised, or failed to evaluate properly, the beauty of the vast treasures of Indian culture;—to adopt a supercilious tone towards the people of the country.

All the same, it cannot be denied, that it is the *general absence of a spirit of courtesy and gentlemanliness among the English people in India that has embittered the racial outlook*, and consequently the history of political relations and developments. This has left a vicious trail in the social path. This general lack of courtesy is the offspring of pride. Where is the need to go out of one's way to be courteous to an Indian who is your inferior? People are courteous only to their equals. "Courtesy is a duty the public servants owe to the humblest member of the public," said Lord Lytton. Well, that may be so in England. In India it is what every member of the government and those placed in high positions in other spheres expect from the public! "Life is not so short, but that there is always time enough for courtesies," observed Emerson. But in the exacting conditions of Indian life there is hardly time to attend to such trifling details! If the English had taken the trouble to oil their carriage with a little politeness and courtesy as

it dashed along the tropical roads, there would not have been so much creaking and jolting. One can hardly exaggerate the importance of the truth contained in the following wise words of Burke on the importance of good manners and courteous conduct. "Manners are more important than laws. Upon them, in great measure, the laws depend. The law touches us here and there, and now and then. *Manners are what vex or smooth*, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and colour to our lives. *According to their quality they aid morals, they supply them or totally destroy them.*" (Burke.) Judged by these standards, what a contrast the conditions in India present! If the English here would take to heart the profound words of wisdom of this broad-minded statesman a good deal of the present day friction would disappear, and the need for so many laws and ordinances would vanish. It would be rather a delicate question to ask what has been the nature of the *manners* that guided the conduct of the English residents in India in the past. But it is only when the English try and *reform their manners*, at the same time that they try to *reform the conduct of the Indians by their laws*, that the conditions are likely to improve materially. At present, the dark or brown wings of the Indian's spirit beats in vain against the bars of the racial prison-house to fall back bruised, bleeding, and maimed.

"In the old days the personal touch was the secret of the trust and confidence established between the Englishman and Indians," says Captain Ellam in his book "Swaraj" — one of the few helpful remarks in

that amusing work. At present however, "personal touch" seems to be the *secret of the irritation* shown by the English. "Unfortunately," *there is a tendency nowadays to consider it bad form to cultivate friendship with Indians. I know, because I have myself had a hint to this effect more than once, not only in respect of Indian friends but Siamese, Sinhalese, and others.*" ("Swaraj," p. 140.) It would have been a good thing if it were merely a "*tendency.*" It is a very ugly, veritable *fact*. But at least the Indian has the satisfaction that he is despised in company, that the *good form* of some of the English is shown not only towards the people of India, but towards all the Asiatics! "Thus I have met people who have spent their lives in the East," continues Capt. Ellam, — and there are still many who are so living, though it is doubtful if "life" is the correct word for such a type of superior "non-human" existence, which seems to resemble that of the "Sadhus" and "Sanyasis" who are said to live in the Himalayan slopes, or of people like the "Lotus-Eaters," — "who knew no more of the people they lived amongst than if they had never left England." ("Swaraj.") But it is still more interesting, if not comic, to find some of these *very same people* emerging as expert authorities on Indian questions subsequently, when they settle down in England on an Indian pension! Indian pensions seem to have certain unique properties, certain truth-developing qualities! Some of these people write authoritative volumes on Indian life and conditions, and they are also sometimes called upon to give evidence before committees appointed to deal with Indian problems. They get plenty of chances to shape popular opinion on Indian conditions in England, directly and indirectly. The

Conservative members of Parliament may be said to know more about Indian conditions than many of these people who have spent sometimes two decades in India. For, besides their immediate and absorbing questions of pay, promotion, and other official prospects and pension, and their consuming interest in their domestic and social pleasures, such people had very little contact with, and knowledge of, Indian conditions. But when they leave India they blossom out as omniscient politicians competent to deal with any Indian question. It is amusing to watch them laying down the law for India! The Indian students who pass out from the Indian Universities would be as much acquainted with English conditions and life as a good many of these people returning from India. These students gather stray bits of information from English books, literary and historical. But they are as competent to speak on English conditions from such a poor source as these presumptuous people who burrow the great part of their life in India in their narrow social holes! Yet, such are some of the *wonderful humanists who decry the Indian caste system!* It is remarked that it is such sins as we tolerate and nurse in private that we are most vehement in denouncing in public. How far that is really the case with the Englishmen and their social usages observed in India, one cannot say positively. But it is amusing to hear Captain Ellam accusing the "Swarajists" of "insolence." "That such ill-feeling as exists between ourselves and our Aryan relatives," — this gentleman has been vigorously working out the ethnic theory in his book — "is not caused wholly by the insolent tone and bearing of the Swarajist Aryan relatives." Whether it is the insolence of the Swarajists or the superior

insolence of the English Aryan kinsman, it is difficult to say. But well may the Indians say "Save us from our relations!"

One of the remedies suggested by this gallant Captain may be also mentioned, since it is incredible in its audacity and startling in its originality. He suggests in all seriousness that the Andamans should be colonised by the Indian Swarajist politicians! There was a talk sometime back to settle the Eurasians there. But the trouble with this attractive and novel idea is that there would not be *room enough* for all the jabbering lot of Swarajist politicians! Further, there is nothing preventing them from starting the game of political agitation there also, in which case the authorities will be compelled to move them bag and baggage to some other place, before they make their welcome departure to hell! A better remedy appears to be that the English people and other "*white settlers*," who when compared with the Swarajists are very few in number, and can therefore be easily transported, might as well take up their permanent abode in the Himalayan slopes, or in one of the hill stations in the Western Ghats, or other equally fine higher altitudes. This is also easy, because most of the English people make it a point of going to the hills for the "season," and setting up temporary, but rather expensive, establishments. These can be easily converted into permanent ones and they need not come down to the sultry plains and find the presence of the Indians rather embarrassing and getting on their nerves. It would be easy in these days when there are the aeroplanes and wireless communication and the radio and other devices to satisfy their needs,—and from a height some of these may be more economic also!

Those who are fond of the company of Indians can easily slip down from their superior heights and get back after the visit is over. That sounds a more agreeable arrangement than sending the whole lot of "Swarajist" politicians to the Andamans! There is a movement now slowly progressing, called the "Zionist" movement. The Jews are being helped to get back to their home in Palestine. Similarly, if there is a racial movement here to settle the English people in the hill-stations, — if they are still enamoured of an Indian existence, — where they can carry on their affairs—private and public, as they like, that would be a good thing. This seems a more satisfactory method of dealing with the Indian racial problem, since the presence of the two parties in the same altitude seems to be fraught with embarrassment and irritation for both. Recently, the Home Member of the Government of India objected to the use of the term "foreigner" to the English people. It is a very hopeful thing to be assured that they are not foreigners, and that they are "sons of the soil." But the trouble is that if they are the "natives" of India, then the present attitude towards the other "natives" is rather inexplicable. Some of them are quite amphibious in this respect. They live in England and in India. They are citizens of both countries. It is interesting to watch them sailing in two boats at the same time.

Just as the interesting experiment of a bi-metallic system was tried during the nineteenth century to solve the currency difficulties of the world, so also it may be suggested; that there should be some sort of a clear understanding of the values of the different *shades of colour of the various nationalities*. According to the rate of exchange between the sterling and the dollar,



one pound is equal to 4·85 dollars; one pound is equal to 22·25 francs; and one rupee is roughly equal to 1s. 6d. Why not have a *racial bi-chromatic standard* with white and brown, white or yellow as the case may be? The value of the different nationalities according to their colour may be fixed somewhat as follows: two Chinese or two Indians or three Africans are equal to one Englishman or one American or one and half Frenchmen or one and half Germans or one of the other Continental nations. The value of the different hues, brown, dark, yellow and white may be fixed in some such manner! If there is a regular agreement on the matter, then a good deal of the present uncertainty, irritation, and friction would be over. Every race will know its own value in the racial market. It will not solve the colour problem, no doubt. But it will remove the preliminary obstacles of uncertainty and vagueness in which the whole thing is enveloped at present. Later on the values of some of these might appreciate. Then a new ratio can be fixed. They are fixing such international ratios in armaments, in battleships and in other matters. Why not in the *racial* also?

“Among unequals what society

Can sort, what harmony of true delight,”

asks Milton. Similarly what good can one expect from the unnatural conditions, from the peculiar features of Anglo-Indian social life? “From social intercourse are derived some of the highest enjoyments of life: where there is free exchange of sentiments, the mind acquired new ideas,” said Addison. From the social conditions in India are derived some of the most *bitter moments* in one’s life. What new ideas can be acquired from the conditions of Indian life, what ennobling sentiments are derived from the *racialism* in

India, it would be interesting to know? Racial customs barriers have prevented the free flow of intellectual commodities — even if they were goods which appealed to the English intellect — in the past and even at present.

## CHAPTER XVI

### *Manifestation among the different classes—contd.*

One of the most important causes which contributed in no small measure towards the mental alienation of the two communities was the fundamental difference in the habits of life, the mode of dress, the differences in religious beliefs, the mistaken estimates of the standards of personal and civic cleanliness, and the differences in diet. It is still on the *physical plane* that the obstacles to a friendly understanding appear most numerous and most serious. The Englishman going about in his European costume is inclined to look down upon the Indian who moves about in his "dhoti" or other varieties of "native" dress in the different parts of the country. This attitude is in vivid contrast with that of the English residents during the course of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries when they themselves *adopted the Indian style of living* in their homes. But the strange part of this sartorial prejudice is that even when the Indian happens to be clad in western habiliments, some of the English are very much amused at the strange imitations of their style. According to Carlyle, "man is a curious kind of clothes horse!"

Further, the style of eating and drinking has been in many cases responsible for the prejudices against the Indians. Accustomed to the use of fork and spoon from his infancy, the Englishman regards any other style of eating as barbarous and untidy. The China-

man who uses his chop-sticks looks down sometimes with amusement, and sometimes with contempt, on the Englishman who uses his knife and fork. The Indian who washes his hands very carefully before his meals is inclined to treat with scorn the English habit of dispensing with this formality. After all, both parties have got only to tolerate the customs and observances of the other, instead of passing ignorant and indiscriminate judgments on them. The Indian takes his bath daily once, and there are many who do this twice. The European wears his trousers, and the Indian puts on his "dhoti" or other varieties of "native" dress. The Englishman finds that particular style more convenient and economic for a cold climate. But for a hot Indian climate the Indian variety is more hygienic as well as more convenient. But if the Indians wear this comfortable dress, that is regarded as an inferior type of costume, and there is a craze among the shallow-minded Indians to ape *blindly* the fashions of the west! Similarly, the Englishman finds it difficult to appreciate the Indian systems of music. His ears have been trained to the western form from his childhood, and since it is about middle age that some of them come here, at least, after their outlook had been crystallised and their opinions cast in a rigid and unalterable mould, he is not "moved by the concord of sweet" Indian sounds. On the other hand, the Indian used only to the indigenous systems of music naturally finds it difficult to appreciate the western systems. That the whole outlook is influenced by early training may be stated without serious fear of contradiction. There are many Indian Christians who are as Europeanised in their outlook towards Indian music as the English them-

selves. This is because, in their homes or in the schools which the children attended, only the English system of music is taught. Naturally they grow up with a bias towards the western system, and some of them find it difficult to relish Indian music. I have come across many examples of this curious development among the Indian Christians. But the contempt of the Englishman for the Indian systems of music is as unfounded and unjustifiable, arises as much from lack of taste, and training, from impatience of the Indian variety and from deep-rooted prejudices; as the inability of the Indian arises from the same sources. In this matter it is difficult to say who is more prejudiced. Both are in the same class. Handel and Mozart may be all splendid in themselves, but to the Indian, the music in his native tongue, whether Tamil or Hindustani or other Indian languages, is the most wonderful, the best in the world. Similarly, those English people who are used to their peg of whisky and soda despise the Indians who consume arrack and toddy, though both are votaries of the same God! Both derive the same kind of enjoyment or vexation from it.

Then there is the prejudice arising from the mere *difference in colour*. The English people have invariably a feeling of strangeness in most cases, and of disgust in a few cases among people who have developed their æsthetic sense to a higher degree than others! — at the sight of the dark or brown Indian faces. Some of them are not cultured or unprejudiced enough to get over these superficial differences arising from the results of a purely external phenomenon. Tennyson may speak of the "kindly dark faces" in his "Defence of Lucknow." But after the Munity,

while the "dark faces" are there, the "kindliness" has somehow disappeared. The charity and culture of the vast majority of English people in India are not such as could get help them to over these physiognomic prejudices and perils. They are not able to pierce through the outer veil of pigment, and the Röntgen rays of love and charity will not enable them to see straight into the minds and hearts of their brother-man. It is a very interesting feature *that colour bias is more pronounced among the Anglo-Saxon race*, among those who consider themselves as more cultured and civilised than the other races of the world! It is in England and America, and other colonies settled by the Anglo-Saxon stock, that this "chromophobia" (fear of colour) exists in all its revolting and unnatural forms. It is in these highly *democratic* countries that colour prejudice exists in its most monstrous varieties! A highly significant fact, which has its own implications. "All colour maniacs are spiritually sick," says one well-known writer. But then these people are not "maniacs" at all. They are all eminently sober and level-headed people. Their delicate and highly developed retina shrinks at the appearance of any other colour besides that to which they have been accustomed from infancy. The nations of the Mediterranean region and those of South America seem to be singularly and blissfully free from this racial defect. It would be interesting to find out the reason for this strange social fact. Perhaps that might give us the real explanation for this mental development of the Anglo-Saxons, for their peculiar "revulsions" at the sight of black faces. Here is scope for a scientist and a philosopher to work.

The author of the highly useful book "Hints on

Self-Culture," (Dr. Hardayal), makes a very interesting suggestion to get over this colour prejudice. "This mental aberration can be cured by *chemical or moral remedies*. Some scientists should invent a paint, which should be accepted as the standard, authorised, colour of the skin for all men on earth," as they are trying to set up gold as the medium of currency throughout the world. "The exact shade does not matter; *the chief need is uniformity in hue*. Let an international congress choose white or black, whitish-black or blackish-white, yellowish-brown or brownish-yellow, reddish-yellow, or yellowish-red," says this writer. Perhaps the choice may be partly determined by the facility and ease in mixing some of these colours! "Let us paint all new-born infants this colour. There should be continual repainting throughout life," just as one washes ones clothes when dirty, and just as there are beauty experts and houses which would restore the faded colour to the pale cheeks of a wealthy dowager who is still very anxious to shine in society although age had set its unmistakable and ravaging stamp on her face. "Let there be absolute uniformity in this respect; all variety is banned. Then the colour problem is solved. This is the chemical remedy." (Self-Culture," p. 258.) Thus if the customs-house officials who scrutinise the luggage of the passengers arriving in India from Europe are also authorised to administer a fresh coating of this chemical preparation, that would be an admirable and easy way of solving the thorny colour problem in India and the rest of the world. Such a procedure would also be more effective in removing the fruitful causes for war, since national animosities spring mostly from racial and colour prejudices. Thus there can be an enormous amount of

saving on the huge sums squandered on armaments by the different countries. If some of the multi-millionaires who are charitably disposed could create a "colour-trust" and manufacture this particular variety which is approved by an International Chemical or Racial Congress, and which is later on applied on every one in the world, that would be the best way of solving the world's colour problem. And after all it is not impracticable. If Lloyd George could devote his crusading ardour which he has lavished on his "New Deal," and if the American President could divert the attention of his "Brain Trust" to this problem and Mussolini and Hitler could co-operate in this work, there is no reason why it should not succeed!

*If side by side with this chromatic reform, the educational system is also so modified to remove the national and colour prejudices that the children now contract from their early period of training, the colour problem would be automatically solved. It is a very significant fact that children are absolutely free from colour prejudice. I remember well a distinguished England-returned lady from South India, who spent two years in London for higher studies in one of the science subjects, telling me, that the children of her land-lady were very much interested in her appearance and colour. They did not betray in the least any symptom of contempt or disgust. They were simply amused and delighted at the appearance of the lady and used to ask her and their mother all sorts of awkward but interesting questions — as children always do — as to why this particular lady, who was a welcome guest in the English home, had a colour different from the ordinary, why her facial livery was different from theirs. One feels*



that this is more or less the *general attitude of all English children*. And it is only when they grow up they are infected with the racial virus. How tragic and pathetic! One is reminded of the severe words of Christ. "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (St. Mathew, Ch. 18, verse 6.) It would be interesting to find out that if the sentence was to be executed how many among the English people would have escaped the fate of drowning! I was reading the other day through "Uncle Tom's Cabin," — a second or third time — when the conditions mentioned there struck me very forcibly. I felt that if there was a Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe in India among the English residents, who could describe the conditions of racial relations in all their revolting details, with imaginative power and sympathetic insight, a good deal of the unnaturalness and injustice of the present situation would have been exposed. But whom do we find except people of the type of Miss Mayo! "We have no continuing city here, but we seek one to come; wherein God himself is not ashamed to be called our God: for he hath prepared for us a city," read Uncle Tom, on his way when he was being led away as a slave by the forebears of Uncle Sam. When Eva, the little trustful child, was talking in a very friendly and intimate manner to the newly purchased slave, Uncle Tom, Miss Ophelia objected to it and drew the attention of her father towards that saying, "But a black man seems so dreadful." The reply that was given by Mr. St. Clare is highly significant and may be applied to the Indian conditions.

"You wouldn't mind a child's playing with a great black dog and caressing 'him,' yet you shudder at the idea of her caressing a creature that can reason, and think, and feel, and has an immortal soul! You good people in the north," and the many good English people in India — "who are so indignant at the wrongs of the blacks, nevertheless loathe the black when you meet him, as if he were a snake or a toad." Does not the same state of affairs exist in India though not in such a revolting and monstrous manner? Do not Christian European nations treat in the same manner the people of Asia and of Africa? Slavery is legally abolished. But does not the same attitude as existed during the days of slave-trade continue at present also? Would that some of the more fair-minded among the English protest against the inhuman and unchristian nature of the relations that often exist between the "white races" and the black and brown races! The same truth is illustrated in the story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," namely, that it is from the *children* that grown up people have to study racial charity, and racial tolerance, and racial justice. The days of slavery are gone. But the spirit, the outlook, which produced those conditions are not yet extinct. It may be perhaps objected that it is unfair and wrong to compare the conditions of slavery which prevailed in America during the last century with those of the racial conditions in India. But I think that virtually the same *spirit* exists at present also. It is true that one does not hear the clanking of the chains, the cracking of the whip, the groans of men, the sighs of women or the weeping of children. These external and physical symptoms are evidently absent. But do not, spiritually and mentally, and emotionally, the same conditions exist

now also? It is rendered worse by the fact that the possibilities of enjoyment, the vision of a better state of affairs, the knowledge of the injustice of the arrangements in the Indian mind, these and other factors have served only to aggravate the existing complaint. A superior Anglo-Saxon master, evidently unconscious of the pain he causes; the *Indian's* mind lacerated and the spirit bleeding, embittered, and in revolt, suffering the same "*mental*" agony — whatever else it may be to others, to me it is so — are not these a reproduction of the old state of affairs? Of course the problem has been elevated from its *physical* aspect. It is rendered worse by the fact that it is undeserved in most cases. The capacity for feeling and enjoyment has been improved by education and other material and intellectual improvements of the environment. Besides, all other forms of tyranny are dying out. Religious tyranny is almost extinct. Economic tyranny is struggling hard against its determined foes. Political subjection is fighting a grim battle. But racial tyranny seems to flourish unchecked. Would that there was a Wilberforce or a Mrs. H. B. Stowe to protest against the inhumanity of the whole thing, against the barbarity of the present conditions! Slavery was suppressed because it was such an open, revolting, monstrous thing to the physical eye, as well as to the finer instincts of humanity. Racial tyranny is tolerated and even encouraged, because it is so subtle, so specious in its manifestation.

It used to strike me as extremely *unfair* on the part of the Creator that He should have given all human beings the same *human skin*, — not in its colour — but in its physical properties—living, delicate, capable of feeling the different sensations, as that He has appa-

rently given to the "white" races — to superior people like Miss Mayo, and numerous other Anglo-Saxon "ladies" and gentlemen! — and not given to the Indians, Africans, and other "niggers" — to other "backward" races, — *backward* would be more appropriate — a more thick, coarse, unfeeling external crust like that of the armadillo, the crocodile, and the buffalo! Then the petty racial pin pricks of the "whites" will be lost on them! Then the annoying and humiliating punctures and incisions into the dark epidermis would be ineffective. Did the Creator anticipate such a state of affairs as at present, when he created the race of mankind? Some of these questions might appear a bit flippant, even blasphemous to the conventional, self<sup>p</sup> complacent, pharisaical Christians of the West. But they proceed from the inmost soul, from the depths of human emotion, protesting against "man's inhumanity to man."

"Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them," says St. Mathew — as some of the modern disciples seem to be doing. "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come to me: for such is the kingdom of heaven." (St. Mathew: Chap. 19, v. 14.) "The Kingdom of Heaven" may be for such, but the kingdoms of this world are for quite a different class of people. Does not the racial outlook and conduct of the European *Christian* nations to-day remind one of the rebuke which Christ administered to the Pharisees of old? "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Is it not the same story of Christianity in Eastern lands? Have the racial traditions served to enhance the reputation of Christian

nations, the honour of the Gospel, the good name of Christianity? Is not Christianity in a good many cases the hand-maid of Imperialism; imperialisms of different kinds, including the *racial*. It used to be a matter for regret and surprise to some of the earnest missionaries that Christianity is not making the grand appeal it ought to do to the educated and higher castes in India. It was making more progress among the "depressed classes." Is not this one of the explanations? The corporate conduct of western Christians is hardly such as to commend itself to the thinking section of the Indian population. There are other hindrances also besides the racial. But in my humble opinion, the racial attitude, which is not "*very*" Christian, has partly served to place obstacles in the way of the message of Peace and Love. It might appear to some quite presumptuous on the part of a very poor and obscure individual like me to pass remarks on the conduct of the eminent missionaries and Christians of the West. True. One is conscious of that. But at the same time I cannot help feeling now and then, that unworthy as I am, the fact seems to have escaped more competent people, or that they are not anxious to say it out. This is not denying the good that the missionaries have done.

"The white children have been brought upon dusky bosoms and love them. *It is colour alone that creates an offence,*" wrote the Editor of the "North American Review" while commenting on the significance of the "Emancipation Day." Is it not true of the conditions existing in India also? "Woe unto the world because of offences"—and it includes the racial offence also—"for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence

cometh!" or that community by whom the offences come. "It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble." "It is colour alone that creates an offence, and this is *unchristian* and must die out, as will every other indignity against humanity and to God." It may be "unchristian," but it is quite patriotic, and that is quite a different thing. It may be an "indignity against humanity and to God," but it is a glory to national vanity and pride! "The black man, wearing his unfading and God-given badge of race, equally cultivated, equally rich and self-possessed," — equally endowed with all the finer sensibilities — "will live beside his neighbour and enjoy the same opportunities and bounties of a common heaven equally with his Saxon fellow-citizens, both unconscious of the *different livery each one wears*," wrote this fair-minded editor on the occasion. Are not the words applicable to the conditions prevailing in India also? Economic and other forms of slavery were abolished after a good deal of agitation. But racial slavery still exists, but it will suffer the same fate of the others. Most of the English children born in India are brought up by "dusky" hearts, though not "bosoms" in the literal sense of the word. But later on there is a fundamental cleavage between the "white-livered" children with unfreckled skin, and the "black-livered" ones of the same Heavenly Father. It is highly amusing to see and hear some of these people repeating their creeds on every Sunday in their churches of one "Father!" The racial system and practice may be an "indignity against humanity and to God." But in India it is an extremely convenient practice and a very powerful

social creed, as strong as the Indian caste system which most of these philanthropic gentlemen denounce!

Besides this physical revulsion created in the minds of the English who are well versed in the science of colour, thereby aggravating racial prejudices, there is another factor which has placed obstacles in the way of social intercourse in India. The English people are generally shocked at the amount of dirt that may be found in the crowded streets of the Indian towns. Civic cleanliness is being developed in the Indian mind with the growth of towns. While as *individuals* most of the Indians try and keep up a standard of cleanliness such as is humanly possible with the standards of life to which they are used to, which will compare favourably with those in England; as a *community*, the level of *civic cleanliness* maintained leaves much to be desired. It is not uncommon to find dirt and waste matter dumped into the streets in Indian cities. The people are not considerate about the health and convenience of their neighbours. This arises as much from their ignorance, their undeveloped civic consciousness; since towns on modern lines are comparatively of recent growth in India, and the transition from the rural into the urban conditions is not happily over in a good many places. But the most important reason is the appalling *poverty* of the country, a point on which the Englishman has very little reason to complain. If there is a better distribution of wealth, and if there is an improvement in the standards of life, there is no reason why the economic standards of the people should not be raised; and the poverty, dirt, and disease which now work havoc in the urban and rural life should not be reduced, and finally eliminated. It hardly comes with a good grace from the English

people who are maintained in comparative comfort from the Indian resources and revenues, that they should continue to despise the people of the country because the vast majority of them are not in a position to maintain a decent standard on account of their dire poverty!

Further, some of the English people living in India, and most of the foreigners who visit the country, cannot *resist the fatal temptation to generalise from imperfect observations*, from erroneous data, from mistaken impressions, from superficial ideas. Thus it may be said without serious fear of contradiction that it is the fundamental, irreconcilable difference in the standards of living, the flagrant variations in tastes and amusements, in their diet and drinks, of the Englishmen and the people of India, that have played the most decisive part, apart from *colour* variations on the physical plane, in creating a strong and lasting wall of prejudice and separation. In Christ Jesus there may be no difference between Jew and Gentile, between Hindu and Christian, between East and West; but before the racial Deities, in the Imperial Temple, there is a fundamental difference between the English and the Indian, between the whites and the browns. How far this difference between the English Divus and the Indian Lazarus would continue in future also, how far the almost unbridgeable racial gulf between them would disappear with the slow march of Time, it is not easy to say at present. Anyway, it is hardly possible to exaggerate the ominous part of this physical and economic factors. Thus the English lady writer who commiserated the hard lot of the poor Indian "who lived on rice and curry" has many descendants and admirers at present. As long as this contemptuous atti-



tude towards those who live "on rice and curry" "*lives*" in the minds of those who are brought on meat and fish, there is very little chance of the present burden of racial prejudices which some of the western Christians carry with them — heavier than which the Christian carried in "Pilgrim's Progress," — disappearing. But are not these after all shallow, trifling, little details and differences, and are not these very petty and uncultured but "imperial" minds that make a great deal out of these superficial differences? The best antidote to this racial malady is a stronger and frequent dose of *charity*. This is easily available without going to any chemists and without paying any price for it. Perhaps it is because it is free that it is despised! But the attitude is so deeply woven into the very texture of English outlook that one can hardly envisage a state of affairs where the English people would be prepared to tolerate the existence of other habits of life and other colours different from those of their own, side by side, in their narrow, conventional, social groove. The most important thing required at present is a more charitable outlook, a more accommodating spirit, a more *decent and gentlemanly* behaviour, a better sporting spirit on the part of the two sections of the population, particularly on the part of the English; a disposition not to emphasise the petty unimportant details, but a real desire to understand and respect the view of the other party. The existing attitude of *superiority* is one of the most powerful obstacles in the way of this "*rapprochement*," just as the spirit of *suspicion* in the Indian mind is one of the most serious difficulties from the other side.

The following incident which took place during the second quarter of the eighteenth century would serve

to show more effectively than all laboured descriptions, how artificial, and in many cases baseless, the pretensions to superiority of the English people are. An Indian of Portuguese descent had been taken on as a "boy" or servant by an Englishman, who, like the majority of his countrymen then, possessed a very vigorous and refined vocabulary which was greatly improved and enriched by constant use against his servants! He used to call the servant "you black man," "you nigger," "you dark fellow," and so on. The word "bloody" had not come into fashion then! Once the English boss was having his shave, and those were pre-safety-razor days. His delicate white skin used to come off very badly after a shave with many nasty scratches and cuts. The blood stains could be found on a piece of paper wherein he used to wipe and clean his razor. The Indian servant one day came quietly into the room when his master had just finished his chin-surveying. He pricked his own finger with a pin, and extracting a few drops of blood, placed them side by side with that of his master. When the Englishman returned after his wash, the servant humbly asked him, "Sir, you please to tell me which my blood is, and which yours?" His master did not follow the trend of the question, and in his usual short-tempered manner roared out in a truly sergeant-major like style, a terrific string of oaths, which showed how vigorous some of the English were in those days when it came to the question of language! He asked the boy what he meant by the question. It was once more repeated, and the only answer the "boy" got was a blank and menacing look, with sparks of fire gleaming from his blood-shot eyes. At last the servant said:—"Sir, that's all the difference between your skin and

mine. Your skin is white, mine is dark. You call me a "nigger," "black man," "dark Indian" and so on. *But our blood is the same. The difference is only in the skin.*" The Englishman realised the absurdity of his position, and was also struck by the ingenuity of his servant. From that day forwards, he was treated as a member of the family. There is a moral and a fundamental truth implied in this incident, which is an eloquent and convincing refutation of the claims to superiority of the Europeans. It shows how shallow the foundations are of this "*epidermic*" superiority, the only superiority — if it is a superiority — that *some* of the English could claim. My friend who told me the story is from Goa, and he gave me to understand that it is recorded in his family chronicle which is still preserved.

Another entertaining manner in which this nauseating manifestation of colour superiority, of this "infernal impudence" as H. Belloc would put it, obtrudes itself in the racial sphere, is in the colloquial language of the Englishmen in India. Racial exclusiveness and superiority are not, unfortunately, a mere passive, harmless, social phenomena. They are aggressively and offensively exhibited in the ordinary speech and action of the English people. "Under the tropics is our language spoken," said the English poet, Edmund Waller. (1608-87.) But the variety current in colloquial and ordinary usage in India is something different from the true English pattern, perhaps modified to reflect the conditions of a tropical existence, such as its heat and warmth, and the fiery passions engendered by them! The term "wog" and many others, preceded by the unfailing epithet "bloody," which not in a few cases embraces a good part of the

working vocabulary of the unrefined Englishmen in the tropics, is a term which reveals this disgusting attitude. But such "dignified" monosyllabic expletives are usually heard in military circles, which by their traditions, professional standards, etiquette and environment, cannot indulge in the luxury of too many choice phrases and words which the civilians use with greater ease, freedom, variety, and effect. The versatile civilians, endowed with a ripper wit and a more caustic, but properly-controlled tongue, have adopted a less direct, though more effective and sarcastic form of expression, which denotes in one breath their concentrated hatred of the present constitutional reforms, "and their reluctance to co-operate in their successful working," as Mr. Byron has it. This is "Aryan brother" — the close relative of Captain Ellam's "Aryan kinsman" — and is mainly used of the very few distinguished Indian politicians, or ministers, or other Indian commercial magnates and members of the legislative councils, etc., whom they condescend to admit to the glorious precincts of their hallowed racial temples once a year. It used to be the custom of the Jewish High Priest to approach the innermost arcanum, to "Holy of Holies," in the Temple at Jerusalem, to perform a symbolic expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole Jewish nation. In a not dissimilar fashion one finds the European community admitting some of the Indians — those who are prominent either in the commercial or official or political spheres — once a year during the occasion of their "Annual Dinner" or some other connection. That, so far as one's knowledge goes, is the only occasion when the frigid social nature of the English thaws in the Indian climate, when the racial sarcophagus is exhibited in public. But

that is a sight hidden from the sight of the ordinary Indian mortals.

*Churches:*—The attitude of racial superiority assumes the most incredible and extravagant form in India in certain places. One comes across its subtle influence, its all-pervasive contagion, in different ways and in different places. The tentacles of the Octopus of racialism are not content with seizing the living victims, but they seem to be stretched out to swallow the dead also, though such a statement might sound almost incredible. Perhaps one or two instances might serve to make clear what one means. The following incident which took place sometime ago at Bangalore is very significant in this connection. One of the Indian Christian members of the English Church at Bangalore, who was also a highly-placed official in the Mysore service, and a trustee of the English Church, wanted to bury his grown-up daughter in the Anglo-Indian cemetery. Permission was refused, since the person was an Indian! Even the glorious sepulchres in which these sanctimonious "Domiciled" residents were buried had to be kept spotlessly "white"! Evidently, some of them like their ancestors, the Pharisees and Scribes whom Christ denounced as "whited sepulchres," were anxious that their final resting place should be kept as pure and racially free as their earthly residences were, and that this should not be defiled by the presence of the "browns" and the "blacks." When the "Last Trumpet" sounds, and when the graves are supposed to give up their dead, these people did not like the prospect of their heaven being shared by the "coloured" people, by the "niggers"! Among the Hindus all caste distinctions disappear with death. All are burned on the funeral

pyre. But with the Anglo-Indian "Christians," caste system triumphs even over death!

Another incident which took place about a decade ago in the same place is equally significant. There was an Indian Christian clergyman, by name David, who used to preach in the English church. His piety and Christian zeal seem to have succeeded in bringing about a "spiritual revival" among the congregation. On his death, however, permission was refused by the people to have him buried in the Anglo-Indian cemetery. The "spiritual revival" this Indian minister is reputed to have brought about, evidently created a "revival" of the racial "spirit" also! That similar embarrassing situations have arisen in other Christian centres in India, in the north Indian diocese also the evidence of Mr. Andrews given in his book "What I Owe to Christ," reveals. Usually such ridiculous incidents do not often occur, since the Indian congregations and the English ones have their respective churches and their different burial grounds, like the temples of the different Hindu castes. Of course, it is not difficult to understand the patriotic, or national, or racial *sentiment* behind such an arrangement. The difficulty arises only when trying to reconcile it with professed Christian principles. Perhaps they never make any such impossible attempts. It is said that "death levels down all distinctions." Evidently not the racial distinction, which triumphs even over death! "Man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave," said Sir Thomas Browne; a remark which is more appropriate to the English "domiciled" community here than to most of the other classes in the world. Man "is a precious porcelain of human clay," observed Byron. Evidently the Anglo-Saxon

porcelain is different from the inferior Indian earthenware! Instances can be multiplied to illustrate the ridiculous nature of its manifestation among the English people in their places of public worship and in their religious ceremonies. It would appear that in America there are special churches for negroes, and special seats for them and so on! What a mockery of the Christian religion! What a splendid exemplification of the democratic principle! Is it not after all on a par with some of the bad customs in the Hindu religion which Miss Mayo and other philanthropic and humanitarian souls so charitably denounced? Well may the Hindus say "Physician! heal thyself"! "The heathen in his darkness bows down to wood and stone," goes the Christian hymn composed by Bishop Heber. The Christian in his pure light bows down to racial Gods! What impressions a Hindu or a Mohammedan or any other non-Christian who enters some of the churches like the "Cathedral Church" or "St. Mary's Church," in Madras and others in different places, where the colours and other trophies which the English captured during the course of their numerous wars in India are hung as a kind of decoration for the walls, may be more easily imagined than described. Perhaps it will be said that they are not at all meant for worship, and that they are not worshipped either. A Roman coming to life at present might mistake some of these places as modern temples of Mars. We have the songs of Kipling and of others, like those of the Old Testament writers who celebrated the victories of the Israelites over their enemies, glorifying the achievements of their countrymen. How it is possible to worship the "Prince of Peace" with all the shining trophies of war, is a rather baffling problem to the ordinary Indian

mind. There is nothing surprising if some of the Hindus look on this as a kind of idol worship, though the English people would be horrified to hear such an interpretation on their conduct!

It is quite interesting to follow the strange and subtle *reaction of the feeling of racial superiority on the character and outlook of the English people in India*. If an Indian were guilty of the rare and unpardonable offence of insulting or ill-treating an Englishman or woman there would be such an excitement in the colony, as if a veritable hornet's nest had been raised. There would be a clamour to vindicate the Majesty of Law and the prestige of its custodians. But if a poor dark Indian were the victim of English high-handedness, there used to be often a conspiracy of silence among the Anglo-Indian residents. How moral standards and ideals of conduct come to be invariably refracted when viewed through the racial prism in India, a good many incidents in every day life reveal. The unbelievable extent to which racial feeling warped the sense of justice of the English in the past may be gathered from the following incident which took place in the course of the eighteenth century at Madras. Rev. F. Penny in his interesting book, "The Church in Madras" (3 vols. 1904), refers to the case of one Rev. St. J. Browne, who was dismissed from service for killing his servant in a fit of ungovernable passion. Describing the incident, Rev. Penny says that it was an "unfortunate error of judgment," — and such errors of judgment are liable to happen pretty frequently in an *Indian climate*! But it is not so much the "error of judgment" of the English minister who knocked down and killed his servant in a passion, that is astonishing to my mind;



as the original justification urged by another Christian missionary apologist of the twentieth century! "Oh judgment! thou art fled to brutish hands and men have lost their reason," says Shakespeare in "Julius Caesar." Even if the word is changed from "brutish" into "British" to describe the conduct of this eminently Christian "padre," it will not be inappropriate!

Not only the common legal and social codes and standards, but even *moral* principles come to be partly distorted while judging the conduct of their countrymen in India. The incident is reported of a certain Bishop (Anglican) in South India — the place and person need not be specified — who made an invidious distinction between an Englishman and Indian guilty of the same sin. A certain Indian member of his diocese was guilty of violating the seventh commandment and leading an immoral life. He was according to the canons of the Church excommunicated. An English planter was guilty of a similar offence, but the Bishop did not care or dare to take any disciplinary action in the matter. Perhaps he was inclined to apply the other saying of Christ, who confounded the Pharisees that brought unto him a poor woman leading an immoral life, with the words:—"He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone"!

The all-pervading nature of this prejudiced attitude was also apparent in the legal system and procedure. During the nineteenth century the Englishmen were above the ordinary Indian law, ordinary tribunals of the land, — these common tight-fitting legal jackets being meant for the usual wear of the inferior Indians! The English people may be guilty of the same crime, but the punishment given was different, as though to mete out the same punishment for similar offences

was a grave violation of the sanctity of law, which in the words of Gilbert and Sullivan, "is the embodiment of everything that is excellent." ("The Lord Chancellor's Song.") When Lord Ripon's government under the influence of Mr. Courtenay Ilbert introduced a bill called after his name, with the object of investing native magistrates in the interior of the country with judicial powers over European British subjects, there was a huge uproar against the government. Up to this time none but Europeans could be appointed Justices of the Peace outside the Presidency towns. Natives, though admitted to the covenanted Civil Service, and possessing high judicial functions in virtue of their office, were not allowed to exercise jurisdiction over Englishmen and other Europeans. According to the Supreme Government the time had now arrived "to remove from the code" (of Criminal Procedure) "at once and completely every judicial disqualification based merely on race distinctions," as the purport of the bill ran. "The anomaly of the situation lay in the fact, "says Mr. Marshman," that native magistrates in the Presidency towns had hitherto had authority to try Europeans, which they lost on removal to higher post in the country districts. The acquiescence of Europeans in the system was attributed to the influence of the English press in these towns, and the presence of the High Courts of Justice. It was now proposed to extend this jurisdiction to covenanted civilians, either district magistrates or sessions judges, to members of the native Civil Service. . . . . The measure specially affected the Bengal European population and the planters, who were scattered over the outlying districts, but it aroused the most violent opposition in non-official classes throughout the coun-

try. A counter-agitation was set on foot among the educated natives, and produced a deplorable outbreak of *racial feeling* and animosity such as had not been excited since the days of the Mutiny." (Marshman: "History of India," p. 544.) There broke out a "storm of agitation, racial animosity, and personal abuse," from the indignant English community in India against the Governor-General who had the presumption to attempt such a racial sacrilege. One of the precious staffs with which some of the white people were wrestling with the brown man's weary burden in the tropics, appeared to snap suddenly! Such were a few of the interesting traditions of impartial justice which some of the English residents in India maintained in the past. The outraged English residents, it would appear, hatched a plot to seize the Governor-General and send him home by the next boat. They boycotted the Government house, and thus provided the inspiration for the Swarajists to start their plan of "boycott" in India!

An incident which happened in the Straits recently is also illustrative of the way in which racial prejudice sometimes tips the scales of justice in the tropics. A very rich and influential English businessman there, who was living in high style and moving among the upper social circles, was charged with the offence of breach of trust. He was the Honorary Secretary of one of the "Welfare Societies" which had managed to collect with some difficulty a decent sum from subscriptions and from other sources. It was discovered later that this gentleman had abused the trust. He was charged with that offence, tried and let off with a small fine of 200 dollars — (about Rs. 350). The law had laid down

a punishment varying from 5 to 10 years imprisonment, and in the case of Indian offenders the maximum punishment used to be given in similar cases. But in this case the fair-minded English judge discharged the prisoner with a paltry sum of 200 dollars! There was considerable excitement in the colony over the decision, and as a result of public agitation the Government had to order a re-trial, and the "white" offender was given six months' imprisonment! During the course of this trial considerable amusement was caused in court by a certain humorous remark that the accused had really followed the *letter* of the law by sending the funds belonging to the "Welfare Society" for his family's *welfare* in England! It is not altogether uncommon to find other cases also where colour prejudice weighs down the scales of justice.

"Justice though painted blind

Is to the stronger side inclined,"

says the author of "Hudibras." In the tropics the couplet may be slightly varied to suit the above case

"Justice though painted blind

Is to the *whiter* side inclined."

It is not implied in this that the outlook of the English people is entirely prejudiced, or that there is no sense of fair play among them. That would be wrong and unfair. But when *their own interests and "prestige"* are at stake, it is not easy to see fair play. Whatever may be purity and the sparkling nature of English character at its fountain head, when it passes through the mouldy Indian racial pipes and cisterns, it comes to be seriously modified by the rusty accretions in the tropics. The home species may be glorious, unexceptionable, and splendid.

An English writer commenting on the nature of the

social life of the English in India, makes the following observations on their relations with the people of India: "The attitude of the Indian towards the ruling race as a corporate entity, symbolical of the West, has necessarily been defined as one of subservience." (Byron: "An Essay on India.") It is also interesting to note that the attitude of the *English community* in India has been described in the same terms by an English writer. G. T. Garratt characterises it as one of "subservience"! But since the days when Mr. Byron wrote a few years before, many important changes have taken place in the political and social outlook, and it is really open to question whether his description of the situation is true of the existing conditions. On the other hand there is a spirit of challenge abroad. The spell of English superiority has been completely broken. Except in very obscure rural areas, it is difficult to find the people in any way showing any respect for the European. Towards the individuals of the English ruling class — towards the separate bees of this bureaucratic hive, — it is one of equality. The Indian recognises "the ruler, but if the ruler is not engaged at that time in ruling," — though by constant usage it has become rather difficult for the Englishman to remember when he is in ordinary clothes and not in his administrative and racial toga — "then the Indian becomes no longer the ruled, but is buoyant and free to employ subtlety or frankness, chatter or reserve, according to his temperament." The Indians have learned from bitter experience in the past when the Englishman has got into his regent clothes and when he is in his ordinary costume. It may be said without serious fear of contradiction *that the tragedy of the social and political situation at present has arisen from*

*the inability of the Englishman to distinguish between these two clearly marked activities.* Since it is an extremely difficult rôle to play constantly, most of them prefer to retire to their private apartments and attempt to live like the Moghuls in close and carefully guarded racial mansions showing themselves to the Indian public at certain stated intervals only during the day time.

That the injustice of the present racial situation has not altogether escaped the distracted attention of the English community in India may be gathered from the following article which once appeared in the "Madras Mail" from the pen of a "Lawyer." "There is no doubt that one of the chief causes of discontent among Indian people of standing and education is the knowledge that a great number of Englishmen look upon them as members of an *inferior race*,"—though the majority among the "great number of Englishmen" may be lacking in culture and refinement!—"and it must be galling to them to feel, as they must feel,"—when this sympathetic imaginative perception dawned upon this "blooming" lawyer it would be interesting to know!—"that they are suffering under this stigma." Whether it is a hopeful sign that the English have perceived the injustice of the whole state of affairs, it is hard to say. For, previous to this the Indian had at least the feeling that the English people were really unconscious of the social wrong they were causing as a community, and that if they were aware of the bitter feelings of the Indians on the matter, their *naturally just instincts* and their spirit of "gentlemanliness" would revolt at that, and induce them to change their offensive conduct. But now the Indians know that the present attitude is *deliberately* maintained, in spite

of the realisation of the unjust and monstrous character of such a behaviour. That makes the situation still more ugly. It can easily lead to the impression in the Indian mind that it is not possible to expect any kind of *racial justice* from the English. The pain of the victim when some of the English people put down their foot affected by racial elephantiasis on the Indian was partly mitigated in the past by the feeling that the offender was unconscious of the fault. But when from their own confession they appear to be conscious of the situation, the complaint becomes still more odious, and the possibilities of tolerating it less and less remote.

• This legal correspondent next exhorts his English readers to behave more decently towards the Indians. The reason he gives is very amusing. It is not because he perceives anything unfair or rotten in the existing state of affairs—there is hardly a trace of that feeling in the whole article—but because of *past services rendered during the Great War*! So if these memories are forgotten—and human memory is very short particularly when the account is against one—there is no need to behave decently! “Indians in large numbers have stood with us in too many tight corners for us not to do everything in our power to set this matter right,” says this writer. Perhaps one of the rewards for standing close to the English in “tight corners in the past” is the sitting on them *tight* in the Indian plains now! But the generation of Englishmen that remembers the sacrifices of India during the late war—the vast amount of financial assistance given in the shape of voluntary loans, and millions of rupees given in different ways—has passed away or is rapidly passing away, and a few Rip Van Winkles

may be seen here and there. "Now there arose a king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph," says the author of "Exodus." (Old Testament.) Similarly, there has arisen a generation of Englishmen which does not know — or perhaps does not care to know — the part played by the Indians during the Great War; and even if they do happen to have a glimmering recollection of this nebulous event — a good many of the English politicians find it awkward to cherish the memories of this crisis — they are often inclined to disparage the part played by the Indians. "Every acknowledgment of gratitude is a circumstance of humiliation," said Goldsmith. There is a good deal of truth in it when applied to the Indian conditions.

Fearing that the "lawyer" correspondent has gone too far in acknowledging his obligations to the Indians for the part they played in the War, he hastens to add, *"even though there may be a considerable number of them who are, and always will be, inferior to the ordinary Briton, and to the ordinary Indian of the normal type."* The same may be said of a good many Britons." Perhaps this inferior variety among the Britons may not be met with in the tropics. They prefer to stay at home, and it is only the superior variety that comes to India!

Now, the words of the above "correspondent" raise certain fundamental issues. It may be pertinently asked, since so far the Indian has not got any satisfactory reply to that question:—"What is the *basis* of this gratuitous assumption of superiority of the part of this writer and of others? Is the superiority claimed on moral grounds? Or is it based on intellectual standards? Or is it founded on cultural tests? Or are the physical yard, force, and military efficiency,



accepted as the units of measurement? Or does it more or less rest on a mere *cutaneous distinction*, on *colour difference*, on a *chromatic basis*, on *epidermic excellence*? The Englishman generally shifts his ground when pressed to a corner and it is rather hard to force the issue. Some of them would at once begin to lecture from superior heights about their unapproachable superiority in all these spheres. They do not like to face the *real reason*, the underlying, fundamental reason, that it is mainly to escape from the embarrassing consequences that a free admission of equality would involve, that they nurse the belief, the convenient hypothesis, of racial superiority. In the majority of cases, the belief is a mere delusion, a figment of the imagination. For, there are many exceptionally able Englishmen, as there are equally clever Indians. That on the physical plane there is a certain measure of superiority may be granted. But it would be really useful and interesting to put the other claims to some definite and final test, not the tests now maintained. Military superiority, no doubt, exists.

"Fierce fanatics wedded fast

To some dear falsehood

Hugs it till the last,"

says the poet. But those who whole-heartedly, firmly, aggressively, and blindly believe in racial superiority are seldom fanatics. They are all eminently reasonable people, except in this one particular respect. It is high time, however, that this racial toxin is eliminated from the English body politic in India. Otherwise it will bring on a more serious complaint. Like the Prince of Arragon, the English have not shown any disposition to "jump with the common" Indian spirits nor to rank themselves "with the barbarous multi-

tudes" of India.

Thus the influence of a variety of circumstances and causes facilitated the slow emergence, the gradual development of the disagreeable image of racial superiority on the Anglo-Indian social canvas, until with the sudden exposure to the blinding and lurid rays of the Mutiny it assumed an unalterable form. The general backwardness of the country, the abysmal ignorance of the languages of the people, their literature, and culture on the part of the English residents here, the difficulties in the means of communication and transport, internal and foreign, which favoured an intensely parochial outlook; the unquestioned and aggressive belief in the inherent superiority of western culture and civilisation; the general tendency of the people of India in the last century to extol the virtues of British occupation; the utter absence of any racial or political consciousness in India and in the East during the last century; a triumphant glow of satisfaction at the wonderful achievements of the English in India which looked only at the bright side of the picture; the deplorably low standard of living among the people of the country; the generally peaceful disposition of the people of India, the mistaken and mischievous cultural and religious ideas disseminated by Macaulay and propagated by a few of the missionaries and other writers; these and other causes have slowly but steadily encouraged the raising of this glorious citadel of racial eminence in India.

Though underneath the placid, restful, and apparently attractive shelter of the majestic British Oak, fitfully transplanted by careful and well-meaning, but generally ill-informed, and often blundering English political farmers to a foreign tro-

pical garden with infinite care and labour, which is vigilantly guarded by efficient, but expensive, Anglo-Saxon watchmen and brown-livered Janissaries, against the sudden encroachment of any daring poachers in the neighbourhood or from a distance, against the startling irruption of the Afghan Panther, or the insidious approach of the Bolshevik Bear, and protected by barbed-wire racial entanglements, and carefully looked after and manured in their proper season by the conscientious "steel-frame" overseers; there may be seen the gorgeous princely peacocks strutting ostentatiously amidst its expansive branches, occasionally preening their resplendent plumage in honour of, or in conformity with, the wishes and orders of their hard-working and sometimes self-righteous guardians and trainers, who are generally very pleased with their many loyal antics. In the shelter of this Imperial tree may be also found the numerous Zemindari parrots twittering amidst its green foliage, and the inoffensive and somewhat anaemic Hindu cow browsing underneath the pleasant shade of its cool, over-spreading off-shoots; the chafing Mohammedan ram nibbling amidst the stubble; the poor, patient, peasant raven pecking the hard, fallow soil; the restless, educated, grunting middle-class political hogs scrambling and fighting for its sparse acorns which seem to make their rare appearance with considerable delay and difficulty at certain periodical intervals; but not without causing some serious flutter and honest misgivings in the minds of its absentee land-lords who pretend to watch with critical tenderness and solicitude the disappointing progress of the democratic plant; although some are furiously sceptical about the eventual success of this strange grafting, and spurt

out a regular volume of Cassandra-like prophecies. But even a casual contact with the rough rind of the gnarled *Anglo-Saxon Brahminical* trunk, leaves behind invariably an unpleasant sense of humiliation in the mind of the *Indian "pariah" victim*, which the gradual and mollifying touch of Time, seldom completely softens or heels.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *Reaction on English Character*

Such an unhealthy racial situation, however, is not without its unhappy reaction on the outlook and on the character of the English people in India, and indirectly on people in England. It would be strange if it were otherwise. "Even more surprising to the outsider, than these manifestations of active or passive resentments at the assumption of equality on the Indian's part, is the extraordinary success which attends the urban residents' determination to maintain an obscure law of species whereby, apart from taste and conventions, it is, he believes, physically impossible for him to cultivate any kind of understanding with Indians other than those with whom his work brings him in contact," says very aptly Mr. Byron. ("An Essay on India.") But it is not a mere "obscure law of species" in India. It used to be the prevailing attitude among the higher castes here. It seems to be the result of the contact with Indian conditions! An amusing remark made by an English businessman at Calcutta once, who had lived in India for fourteen years, but who was shocked to hear from one of the Englishmen newly arrived that he had some friends among the Indians, reveals the incredible extent to which the ludicrous spirit of racialism could be carried. "Oh! do you know Indians?" was the amazed question of this cranky old fossil of racial intemperance in the East. He had been living on the sweat of India's labour, and enjoying the situation "with a few corpu-

lent fellows at the top" as Sydney Webb picturesquely puts it in connection with socialism. India is evidently one of the few *sanctuaries* where these curious specimens of racial birds are allowed to live unmolested. But it is extremely seldom that some of the members of the "superior class" come out with such plain and blunt display of similar racial burlesques, such "elephantine prejudices" as Thackeray would have it.

The following words from the pen of an English writer may be quoted in this connection: "For a dislike of the physical proximity of the Indians is no less an attribute, real or pretended, of white males as well," — the author had been dealing with its funny manifestation among the females, among the "fair sex" — "if pretended, its exponent is beneath the value of my words," — as beneath that of every thinking Indian. "If real, common decency demands that it should be either eliminated or at least sufficiently concealed, instead of, as it is ostentatiously paraded as a symbol of regency." (Byron: "An Essay on India.") When some of the English people had only *this* to parade, one cannot expect them to keep inside such wares from being exhibited in public. When the alternative is between "decency" and prestige" it has not been difficult for the people of India to find out the one which has been adopted by most of the English residents. The gravamen of the racial complaint is that it is *unnatural* and *mischievous* and *ungentlemanly*. That the more discerning, fair-minded and sensitive among the Englishmen in India, whose finer nature had not been warped by racial prejudice and obscurantism feel, and in a very few cases acknowledge, the enormity and the sting of the unjust state of affairs, may be gathered from the following words of

Mr. C. F. Andrews found in his inspiring book "What I Owe to Christ." There would be few in India, either among the English or among the Indians who will be inclined to question the sincerity, the ability, and the credentials of Mr. Andrews to pronounce judgment on this vital question which has exasperated Indian opinion not a little. There are some of the English who might think that the feeling of humanity of Mr. Andrews has outrun his patriotic discretion. But no truer friend of England and India may be said to be existing at this time. None has worked more unselfishly and whole-heartedly for the cause of India and the honour of England than this devoted missionary who has been endeavouring all along to bring about a better cultural and religious understanding between England and India. But for the existence of a few persons like Mr. Andrews, the Indians might as well give up all hopes of finding out a sense of justice and righteousness towards the "coloured races" among the English people. His life is almost a solitary star in the racial firmament otherwise clouded with imperial and racial darkness — not the "darkness visible" of Milton.

Mr. Andrews is describing the experiences of one of his most intimate and trusted missionary friends in North India, who was dissatisfied with the usual attitude and methods of English missionaries in the country. The situation may be described in his own words: "While I had been in Delhi, and also with Stokes in the Simla Hills, the whole question of "race" and "colour" within the Christian Church had troubled me very greatly" — it would be interesting to see what are the things which "trouble" most of the other English people in the Simla and other Hills! —

*"It seemed to me an impossible position to observe, as Christians, racial and colour discriminations in human life. This would inevitably lead on to a new caste system."* Probably Mr. Andrews did not know that it has already brought about the state of affairs which he apprehended. "Such a thing will never be the will of Christ, my Master, who taught the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, for which Christ died upon the Cross, would be made of no effect." It would be interesting to know what doctrine of the "Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man," some of the Western Christians hold! We should "crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to open shame," which is what is unfortunately being done, ("What I Owe to Christ," p. 120.) How far the English people would agree with Mr. Andrews in the following statement, it would be interesting to hear: "For these Indian passive resisters *were better Christians, though they remained Hindus and Christians, just as they were born.*" (P. 131.) "It was the inner moral beauty of India which I was seeking to know at first hand. I could see it and almost grasp it. Sometimes I could instinctively recognise it in human faces I met. But at Delhi I could never comprehend it." (P. 135.) It may be asked how many of the hundreds of English people here could recognise anything of the faintest part of what Mr. Andrews saw in the Indians' face. Have they generally seen anything except the dark and brown pigment, which was entirely different from their external physical covering, from their different racial badge? "Beloved," wrote St. John the Apostle, "let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God."



For God is love." But what about the *racial* God?

That the treatment of the people of India by the English had pained this sensitive Christian soul is evident from the following words which occur in another part of the book "What I Owe to Christ": "Stokes told me that a further thought had weighed much with him when he made his own decision. *His conscience, as a Christian, had been outraged by the racial treatment by Europeans who professed and called themselves Christians. So strong was the colour prejudice that even in 'God's acre' the two races were not allowed in certain places at that time,*" — nor even now — "*to be buried side by side.*" Christians could not be buried side by side! "The fact was glaring in the Punjab that colour bar had laid its stranglehold on the Christian Church itself." (P. 96.) It was not only in the Punjab, that this racial mildew had spread over the Anglo-Indian moral landscape, but also in other parts of India. It still baffles my limited understanding how as Christians, calling upon the name of a "Heavenly Father" in their prayers daily or once a week, most of them could tolerate this distinction! If some one could succeed in explaining it to me how it is possible to serve these two gods, the god of racialism on the hand, and the God that is mentioned in the New Testament, then it would remove the difficulties, the intellectual despair, of some of the people in India.

The following incident which happened some-time back at one of the Calcutta hotels throws interesting light of the racial psychology of some of the English people in India, particularly of the ladies. An Englishwoman "incapable of speaking her own language correctly," refused to enter the lift of one of the Calcutta hotels in company with a "lousy

nigger," — words used only by the lowest class in England! She expressed her appreciation of the presence of the Indian in this gentlewomanly fashion for all the other passengers who were waiting outside, to hear! Incidentally it may be mentioned, that this "lousy nigger" was an Honours graduate of the Oxford University and a scion of a very noble and ancient zemindari house in Bengal!

There is a good deal of truth and tragedy in the following words of Mr. Spear: "To Anglo-India since the days of Wellesley, *pride* and *glory*, *power* and *prestige*, have been more important, than conciliation and understanding, co-operation and compromise." ("The Nabobs.") That is obviously the reason why Imperialistic Viceroys have been more popular with the English community, and liberal-minded ones, like Lord Ripon, and Christian gentlemen like Canning, unpopular. Is that not still part of the explanation of the racial tragedy, of the present bitter state of political and racial relations? But is such an attitude sufficient? Is such a behaviour the sign of wisdom? Is such an outlook consistent with the instincts of fair play of which they boast? Is such an attitude likely to safeguard their interests? The fair-minded editor of "The Madras Mail" — and his words show that there are at least some among the English who deplore the present situation — expressed recently the defects of the existing condition in the following words: "But the Englishman carries with him," as did the Christian in "Pilgrim's Progress" — "a group of notions which forms a sort of measuring rod," — and some of them also use it as a stick — "of things and peoples with which he comes in contact. Some of these notions are admirable; some perhaps foolish. *Many involve him*

to some degree in the sin of superiority." ("Madras Mail," 2nd May, 1935.) It is very encouraging to note that some of the English are beginning to realise the awkwardness of the present state of affairs. *"There is, however, throughout most of India, a painful absence of any cordial relationship between the English and the educated Indians,"* observed most aptly Mr. G. T. Garratt. ("An Indian Commentary," p. 107.) It is just this "absence of cordial relationships" which adds to the bitterness of the present situation. It is against this absence of cordial relationships that I have been raising my voice of protest. At the time of the Congo atrocities, an Irish author wrote:—"The English people love liberty for themselves. They hate all acts of injustice, except those which they themselves commit. They are such liberty-loving people that they interfere in the Congo and cry "shame" to the Belgians. But they forget that their heels are on the neck of India." ("Lala Lajpat Rai: "Unhappy India," p. 437.)

The changed nature of the outlook of the English people coming to India now can be best illustrated by the following remarks of an old mechanic in the employ of the M. & S. M. Railway in South India. A friend of mine who is fairly well-placed in the service of this Company told me the incident. This mechanic had retired from service and he was pretty old also, on the wrong side of seventy. He used to come now and then to his old scene of activities in the railway workshop. Once he was commenting in his usual way on the nature of the present service, and the changes in political situation, yearning for the good old days, when he had occasion to remark:—"What sir, if only the English people who come now to India were of the

same type as the Englishmen who came two or three decades ago, *there would be no Congress, no Swaraj!*" One cannot help feeling that there is a good deal of force and truth in the blunt statement of the old man. It is quite possible that if the same sympathetic type of Englishmen of the days of Munro had continued to come, who were not inclined to look with distrust on the motives of the political leaders in India and the political movements in India, the story of racial and political connections would have told a somewhat different story. How far the Great War was responsible for the tragedy, by suddenly and almost irretrievably snapping the old friendly ties and traditions and leaving a big chasm which has not been subsequently bridged, it is rather hard to say definitely. But one cannot help suspecting some sort of connection between the two events. The majority of the post-war generation of Englishmen do not seem to have revealed—they may be feeling it, but they have not given expression to it—the same consideration for the feelings, the same desire for knowing intimately of Indian conditions, the same respect for "native" sentiments, and the same readiness for conciliation, as the generation which passed away with the latter part of the nineteenth century. Of course, even otherwise the situation is sufficiently difficult because of the profound and rapid changes that have been taking place in India and outside. But it has been aggravated by the *lack of sympathy* and mutual understanding, by the absence of the solicitude of former generations to treat the Indians more decently. There is considerable truth in the shrewd remarks of that old Indian mechanic which the English would do well to take to heart.

The reaction of the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly during the period of Curzon, was highly significant in the matter of the *racial* and political relations between the two countries. The partition of Bengal, though a purely administrative measure in the beginning, later on came to be mixed up with all kinds of other questions, and to keep alive the embers of ethnic and political discontent. It is open to doubt whether the ripples of that upheaval have altogether disappeared even now. At the same time there was a *slow change coming over the attitude of the English officials* in India. Lord Curzon himself refers to this. "The number of officers who spoke the vernaculars with any facility was very much smaller than fifty or twenty years ago, and the number devoting themselves to anything like a serious study of literature of the country was diminishing year by year." ("The Awakening in India:" R. MacDonald, p. 145.) "The separation between governed and governor reached its widest point during the Curzon régime," observes correctly the Prime Minister.

The character of the changing conditions is also illustrated from the following article of Sir Charles Elliot in the "The Westminster Gazette" — quoted by "The Indian Review" for February, 1908. "I knew India first in 1884, and there can, I think, be no doubt that since that *time the European official class has become more isolated*. . . . Nor has the recent *Imperialist movement* tended to lessen this isolation but rather to increase it. The Imperialist thinks of "our dependencies," of the white man's burden and the glories of the island race," and one may also add, the ugliness and inferiority of the "subject" race! "He puts himself and his countrymen in the place of

an Imperial monarch, and in imagination shares the crown. But *that is exactly the type of sentiment that is not wanted in India.*" "The offensiveness of the official had reached its climax," says correctly Mr. R. Macdonald. ("The Awakening of India," p. 150.) So the race of administrators who followed Sir Thomas Munro at the beginning of the nineteenth century, reached its full development at the beginning of the twentieth, and it would be interesting to note the further stages in the existence of this class. The attitude of the Governor-General himself, in spite of the high ideals of justice and efficiency that animated the administration during his time, was not calculated to heal the growing breach. Not only the partition of Bengal which really brought into existence the anarchist movement in its virulent form, but his dealings with some of the Princes wherein he adopted a very haughty and imperious tone, had a depressing effect on the problem. The telegram sent by Holkar to whom Curzon had become the object of intense hatred, is not an unfair reflection of popular opinion on the matter. After declining to meet the Governor-General for a very long time while he was in India, he sent a wire just as Curzon was leaving India saying that as they were now companions in disgrace perhaps they might console each other! The implied sarcasm can only be appreciated when one recalls the circumstances under which Lord Curzon had to resign. His proposals for the reform of the Army administration were not approved by the Home authorities who supported Kitchener in the dispute. That was the immediate reason. There is also another story which would illustrate the nature of the outlook of the people and of the Princes of India towards the Governor-General.

Lord Curzon was anxious that Holkar should receive him, and he sent a message through the Resident to that effect. Holkar replied, "Tell Curzon that I am indifferent." Anxious that the feeling he expressed should be conveyed accurately and not diluted during transmission, he had a further interview with the Resident and made his meaning clear in the following way: "If a beggar goes to see a hippopotamus, the hippopotamus wags his tail. He is indifferent. If Lord Curzon goes to see him, he wags his tail. He is indifferent. I am like the hippopotamus. Explain that to Curzon." (R. Macdonald: "The Awakening of India," p. 149.) According to some of the English writers this tendency towards the mental alienation of the two parties was slightly arrested by the South African War. "Some of the younger men who have breathed the purer atmosphere which has been enveloping Great Britain since the end of the South African War, are following wiser and more sympathetic lines of policy." But it is rather doubtful if the healthy contribution of some of these people is powerful enough to neutralise the mischief that is being done by others who are very unsympathetic and haughty.

The conditions at the beginning of the twentieth century are well revealed by a few clever touches by Mr. Macdonald. "To begin with there is a gulf fixed between the two. This is not altogether our fault, but it is much more our fault than we admit," says Mr. Macdonald. (Idem: P. 151.) He narrates the way in which a very distinguished lawyer of Lucknow who was anxious to become a member of the Public Library at Mussorie was refused permission, "the reason being that he was not a European." (P. 151.) Evidently the *books* also seem to be very *sensitive of the colour*

of the skin of the people who are reading them! Dealing with the exclusive caste system of the English official classes in India, Mr. Macdonald admits:—"This practice of exclusion is the rule in the towns in British India, from Bombay to Calcutta, and from Himalayas to Ceylon. Mention of the Yacht club in Bombay to an Indian is almost an insult. The exclusiveness of clubs is only indicative of a much wider exclusiveness." He mentions one or two specific instances which reveal the deplorable depths to which the whole racial situation has degenerated. On one occasion, an Indian lady who was entertaining him to dinner, speaking of the nature of the relations which prevailed among the refined and educated Indians and the English people of that locality observed:—"I did my best to be friendly with them, but they seemed to resent it. I think the ladies of the military you send here must come from very low classes. They are so rude. I met real ladies in England, not sham ones." This Indian lady has hit the thing excellently well. It is just because a good many of the people here are not truly representative of the culture and refinement and courtesy of England that the whole trouble has arisen. "We have talked on this subject with all sorts of people from Maharajas to Christian outcasts, but we did not meet a dozen Indians who said that the *social relations of Indians and Europeans were happy*. On the other hand, we found that the educated and self-respecting Indian was ceasing to call on Europeans and was cutting off all connections, except purely business ones, with them." ("The Awakening in India," p. 152.) This state of affairs has reached its zenith during the subsequent decades. "Even in educational work co-operation is grudgingly recognised. St.



Andrew's (perhaps St. Stephen's?) College at Delhi has an Indian Principal with a European staff working under him; but the most worthy of that staff, Rev. C. F. Andrews, Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was struck off a list of nominees for Fellowships of the Punjab University by the Lieut.-Governor's hand, and a man of no educational attainments put in his place, *for no other reason than that Mr. Andrews has the confidence of Indians.*" The implication is plain. English people who have the confidence of Indians are unworthy of the confidence of the authorities, as well as unfit to shape the policy of the University! This incident serves to illustrate how tragic is the gulf of misunderstanding and dislike that separates the two communities. Though this may be a very isolated and an exaggerated instance which cannot be taken as typical of the present day conditions, it is open to doubt whether the *attitude behind it* has died out. At least in some cases, the spirit of suspicion and superiority has been well nourished.

"The Pax Britannica has produced *insolence amongst the governors*. They resent the idea of equality, and the more they resent it the more does it take possession of the people. Thus estrangement widens, and shows itself in *offensiveness of manner*, and, in rarer instances, in personal violence. It is of some interest to note that the first mention of the bomb as a way of redressing Indian grievances was when the Calcutta daily vernacular paper, the "Sandhya," spoke of it for personal defence." ("The Awakening of India," p. 153.)

"The relationship is made all the worse by the unfortunate position of the Eurasian. An outcast from English society and intercourse himself, he vents his

unhappiness on the pure Indian, whom he despises most heartily," a feature that he seems to have inherited from the paternal side! "Railway incivilities, which are the most prolific" and one may also say the most disgusting if not virulent, "cause of resentment on the part of Indians, are generally caused by the Eurasian officials. Mr. Macdonald mentions one or two concrete, but comic, instances of the way in which the racial feeling colours and distorts the vision of the English. "Another case . . . . . happened in Benares a day or two before I arrived there. My friend was in a motor car which dared to pass another motor in which a major (or captain) sat. The major laid information that my friend was driving at an excessive speed. The evidence showed that the charge was ridiculous, and the accuser altered his evidence. But the English magistrate fined my Indian friend *irrespective of evidence*, and on the sole ground apparently that military prestige has to be maintained at all hazards. This magistrate would have been much benefited if he had heard the remarks I did." (P. 153.) They really miss the fun since they have very little chance to hear the comments. There are innumerable other instances also which happen daily all over India in their different spheres among the military, the civilians, the businessmen, and others which cannot be brought in here for lack of space. They would make a very good collection of jokes. What St. John says at the close of his Gospel may be applied to the conditions in India. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (Chap. 21, v. 25.) Similarly, if one took the trouble to collect the

humorous incidents wherein the racial superiority of the English are shown in a variety of ways, that would make an amusing volume.

But is such a state of affairs satisfactory and paying to the English? Some seem to be realising the absurdity and the comic nature of the whole position. But the corrosive influence of a fairly long period cannot be wiped out in the course of a very short time. The earlier the English set about it earnestly the better for them and for all parties concerned. Of one thing the English people may be sure. *The Indians are not going to put up with the racial impertinence in the same way as their forefathers did.* Already there are faint and glimmering signs of the dawn of a better state of affairs. *Unless there is a complete change in the racial outlook there never can be,* and there never will be, any friendly relations between the two, any honourable and hearty co-operation.

The racial question has been infinitely complicated in modern days by the *administrative* developments. On the one hand, there is the problem of the efficiency of the services, and there is, on the other side, the desire of the people for a greater and more real share in the government of the country. Now a demand for self-government comes to be associated in the minds of the English with fears in the deterioration of the standards of government. Consequently, some among the English are not in favour of further changes. The whole matter assumes also a racial complexion. In this connection the words of Mr. Macdonald are interesting. Commenting on the tendency to raise the principle of "efficiency" into an end in itself, Mr. R. Macdonald says: "I dispute the principle itself. Efficiency is not better than self-government. In Lord Curzon's

time efficiency was carried to stupid lengths." History repeated itself. That is what happened during the days of Lord Cornwallis a century before. He was keen on efficiency and excluded all the Indians from higher services. Lord Curzon was a firm believer in "paternal government" and not responsible government. Thus we find the repetition of the tragedy on a larger scale. In the worship of the God of Efficiency there was no place for the play of the other human instincts. "The 'superiority' of the personal manners of the official, his autocratic ways of doing things, his idea that he should do for India what he thinks is best for India, arise from the assumption that efficiency is what India wants and needs," says the Prime Minister. The problem has been stated admirably. It is this firm belief in the importance of efficiency that has embittered the nature of the relation between the two parties. Governmental blessings are being forced down the throat of a people who are anxious for freedom of self-expression in the political field. It is a clash between two ideals. But from the racial side it has served to increase the bitterness. "If men were machines that would be all right, and the mechanical excellences of our Government would settle all disputes about our rule. *But men have pride, will, self-respect; and consequently a Government inspired by the idea of efficiency will be never acceptable and its officials will never be gracious.* The annual Reports issued by the Government of Baroda may not be accurate, those of Gwalior may not be satisfactory, those of Mysore may not be reliable; but these three Governments are now doing more for the mind of India, and are helping India more to fulfil itself and to be really efficient, than the British administration."

(Pp. 160-1.) Here one comes across one of the most masterly analyses of the situation which has its tremendous reaction on the racial relations.

The power of the official surroundings, the influence of governmental traditions which are hide-bound and crushing in the nature of their reaction, may be seen from the words of Mr. Macdonald. "The atmosphere, the pressure, the society in which you live and move and have your being are against you" remarks aptly Mr. Macdonald. "Young men come out with *liberal* ideas, and in *six months* they have acquired exclusive Anglo-Indian ones," remarks very aptly this critic. That sums up the whole tragedy of racial relations.

• There is also another reason for the increase in the pride and pretensions of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy. Not only its constant worship of the doctrine of efficiency, but its *resentment of outside interference* is typical of this attitude. That body resents all criticism either by the Indian or by the English. This feature is illustrated by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. "There is a widespread feeling that India must be governed from India and not from London, and that the bureaucracy must be as independent as the administration of a self-governing colony. Hence, whenever, a question about Indian administration is put in the House of Commons the Indian Service considers itself insulted. For the legislator to criticise the administrator is sacrilege. To hear Indian officials explain the mean motives why certain old colleagues put questions about India in the House of Commons, and proceed to claim that no questions should be put at all because they encourage sedition and must be put down by men who know nothing of the country, is a *liberal education in the very worst pettiness of a bureaucracy*. This is, indeed, the

least lovely side of the service. This claim to be left alone free from outside influence is supported by what is a very erroneous view of Indian administration. Not only is this administration not colonial self-government . . . . . it is not an Oriental despotism . . . . . nor is it a bureaucracy of experts. It is an alien bureaucracy. The Anglo-Indian is an Englishman first and foremost" — one might also say first and last. "He has no intentions of settling in India. He is always complaining of India," which seems to be the only country which is abused and kicked for the profit derived from it! "He is a philanthropic slum-dweller at best. He therefore takes short views — unlike a bureaucrat native to the soil such as is found in Prussia. India is something external to its administrators, and it is therefore unusually imperative that some general public opinion other than the Freemasonry of the system of the bureaucracy should be brought to bear upon them." (Pp. 163-4. "The Awakening of India.")

"The present method of Indian government has nothing in common with British methods," says Mr. Macdonald. Nor has the present *racial situation* anything to do with the native instincts of fair play of the English, to the natural idea of sportsmanship so common and prominent among them. In fact, it is because it is so "un-English" that one protests against this so bitterly. It is the miserable perversion of their normal qualities that has been mainly responsible for the racial tragedy. There is a good deal of truth in the words of the Prime Minister, that there is less of real control at present than in the days of "John Company." Then, at least from time to time, Parliament interfered to set

right certain social and administrative abuses. This freedom from criticism has had a very prejudicial effect on the outlook of the administration and it has correspondingly increased their racial presumption. Discussing with great insight the various powerful obstacles in the path of Indian Nationalism, Mr. R. Macdonald in his masterly survey of the Indian situation at the close of his book, "The Awakening of India" says:—"A still more formidable one is the Anglo-Indian community," (p. 182). Mr. Ramsay Macdonald has hardly over-stated the case. "The Service cannot be expected to welcome the Nationalist spirit, though a section, not at all mean in numbers and still less mean in ability, readily admits that Indian Nationalism must grow in influence. But the Service as a whole is opposed. It has even gone the length of condemning as seditious the most innocent phraseology of Nationalism, of asking the judiciary to ban the singing of "Bande Madaram," and to treat as dangerous political characters those who criticise its actions." Dealing with the mentality of the Services, Mr. Macdonald says:—"To hear officials discuss the merits of some of the recent State trials is a painful revelation of a condition of mind blind for the time being to legal justice and individual civil liberty; to hear them characterise some Indian movements like the Arya Samaj with a lofty indifference to strict fact and evidence is an amazing reminder of *how completely nature robs bureaucracies of the political instincts. Nationalism will have to contest ever foot of its advance with the Service.*" How far the prophecy has come true may be decided by the readers themselves. The present situation has exerted a baneful influence on their political instincts, and on their sense of *racial justice*.

The attitude of the commercial community under the changing conditions is treated by Mr. Macdonald. "Nationalism means to this commercial community the supremacy of what is now its *subject race*. I do not think that it regards such an event with the feelings of strong opposition which possess the Services, but it does not welcome the change. It prefers to let things drift . . . . . for one reason, because it is afraid of the economic policy of a Native Indian Government. It has its extreme right wing, however, which supports newspapers like "The Englishman," and is as bitterly *racial in its prejudice* as the Anglo-Indians can be." Here we have the analysis of the Indian situation as it struck one of the shrewd observers of Indian conditions at the beginning of the century. But unless the racial and political prejudices are overcome one cannot hope for any improvement.

The English people in foreign countries like India, always "long for the hedges and the green fields of England, but even for their pubs and slums," observed Mr. George Lansbury in a recent article in "The Daily Mirror." Commenting on the reaction of a stay in India on the character and behaviour of the English the same writer says:—"Lest any foreigner should read this and say that I am becoming too self-righteous, I hasten to add that I know this is not true of every English. I have heard Anglo-Indians talking about "natives" and "niggers" — it would be interesting to know how some of them would be addressing the Indians in the next existence or world! — "in a tone which would disgust every *civilised* man." And if there are English people who indulge in such terms they must be "supermen"! "But I want any foreign critic to believe me that this



sort of chatter is typical only of the "prancing proconsul." It does not go down at all in East London, or in Durham where men "work" for their living." It seems to be the attitude of people who have very little "work" to do; of some of the "corpulent fellows at the top" as Sidney Webb once so admirably put it. It is this attitude that is so jarring, so rude, and so ungentlemanly. Some of the people in India cannot but admire the choice, refined, vocabulary of such cultured gentlemen! The salt of India, since the days of Macaulay, has left some irritating taste in the mouths of *some* of these people who have tasted it for a long time!

Indirectly connected with the racial question is another interesting social phenomenon which has become more prominent of late in India. That is the nature of the *behaviour of some of the Indians who come back after a few years of stay and study in England*. Some of these people tend to betray certain eccentricities in their manners and behaviour — perhaps the counterpart of the behaviour of some of the English in India. Instances are not by any means few or isolated, and one can narrate a good many of these glaring examples, where the young Indian cultural enthusiasts, who after drinking from, or more aptly, gulping down the Pirean springs at Oxford, Cambridge and perhaps London — the Indian ones being rather insipid, inclined to dry up a bit soon under the tropical conditions — returned after the hectic enjoyment of these refreshing, and at times intoxicating draughts, like people who received an apoplectic stroke, with a supreme contempt for the "dirty" Indian ways; forgetting for the time being, their mother-tongue, their old ways of life, and sometimes even their old

*friends* as well! Some of them manage to change their state of "single blessedness" to that of double happiness or wretchedness — more often the latter. The experience of the Prince of Arragon mentioned by Shakespeare in "The Merchant of Venice" seems to have been shared by some of these people.

"With one fool's head I came to woo,  
I go away with two."

Similarly of a few of these people it may be said,

"With one fool's head I came to learn,  
And with two I return."

Not of a few of these "mésalliances" as the French would put it — that is marrying beneath one's class or rank or caste, such miscegenations — inter-breeding, with alien races — have ended, as they often end, very tragically. The phosphorescent properties of most of these matches quickly vanish and they refuse to burn in spite of the hot environment here! It is a pathetic sight to see a few of these wreckages on the Indian social sea. The English people living in India have often nothing but contempt for them — there are a few who pity them — and can scarcely forgive the insult to their "prestige" brought about by marrying an Indian. Among the many deities, Cupid seems to be the only one racially blind! The English women who come to India under such circumstances are seldom freely admitted into the Indian domestic circles; and they are also the objects of contempt of both, Indians and English. They seem to lose caste with both sections. It may be also noted in this connection that those Indians who do marry English women often contract alliances which are not much of a credit to their status, or class, or country. Of course, there are a few isolated exceptions. One can hardly exaggerate

rate the importance of the results of the conduct of the people who go to England on the *reputation and good name of India*. They are the custodians of India's honour, of her culture. Yet how few are conscious of that! If the people in England judge the people of India by their behaviour, by the way in which the students who go to England acquit themselves, there is nothing surprising in that procedure. That they do so was brought home to my sister during the course of her recent visit to London. She was the guest of Lady X. — and the problem of Indian students in England came up for discussion. By the way, this lady had been in the East for a long period and she was anxious to do something for the Indians who found themselves at sea in the new and strange English environment. She had occasion to remark:—"You say, you send us your first rate men. Well, they run after our third rate girls, our servant maids, and kitchen maids." All that my sister could reply was "Whose is the fault?" It is not to be understood from this that all those who go to England for higher studies — and they seem to study certain "high things" which are not to be met with here — make fools of themselves. To the credit of India and the honour of the parties concerned, it is only a very few people who are guilty in this matter. But the point one would like to emphasise is that this is not without *some reaction on the problem of racial relations*. The class of English people with whom most of the Indian students mix with is not often such as to enable them to see and appreciate the best of English life. The reaction of this fascinating but delicate problem on the story of racial relations, on the racial outlook, on the attitude towards the people of India, is very subtle,

profound, incalculable and lasting. The writer hopes to develop this later in another essay "The Indian in England."

While this petty-minded attitude of superiority is exasperating to the Indian mind, it is also not without its corrosive and degrading influence on the outlook of the English residents. It would be surprising if the results were otherwise. But generally the English seem to be hardly aware of the deadening effect of this racial feeling on their prejudiced mental outlook as long as they are in India, that having become a normal attitude with them. It is often when they got back to their native country that others became aware of the nature of this unhappy and ineradicable change, of this complete transformation in their outlook. This state of affairs may be seen from the experience of Lord Wellesley. The author of "Wellesley Papers" gives an account of the meeting between Wellesley and the members of his household on his return from India after a long separation. Both Lady Wellesley and Wellesley's friends who had come together to welcome him on his return after his triumphant official career in India, could not comprehend for sometime the nature of the peculiar behaviour of the noble lord. He found the rude and sudden transition from the scene of constant pomp and regal magnificence of Calcutta, to the simple, unpretentious life of an ordinary citizen of England, quite trying to his nerves and to those of others. The feelings of amazement and regret of Lady Wellesley are expressed in her letters written during this time to some of her friends. The experience and conduct of Lord Wellesley are in some respects a typical example of the fate of all his countrymen who return from India after a fairly long period

of stay in this land. There may be differences in degree. It is amusing to hear of the experiences of some of these "nabobs" when they return to England on an Indian pension! Here they have been used to be attended by a train of obsequious servants. They had only to "boss over" the situation in India. As a nemesis as it were, they have to do everything themselves when they go back. A maid-servant may come at a stated hour to do part of the cleaning and other allotted work. All the rest they have to do themselves. A friend of mine told me of the amusing shock he had when he found a certain head of a department in the Madras Presidency, occupying a small cottage with two rooms, attending to all his needs himself, driving his own carriage — he managed to keep one — grooming his own horse, and performing all the other duties which in India used to be done by an army of servants! It must have been a good corrective to his sense of vanity and self-importance. It is also a partial retribution for living comfortably, depending entirely on the ministrations of others while out in India! Many of them are not particularly anxious that some of the Indians should see them in their homes in England in such a state. The vivid contrast between the scene of pomp and show in India, and in their domestic surroundings is so glaring, that they are often uneasy at the thought that some of the Indians happen to come to know of their real condition. My sister told me of one of the biggest surprises she had while in England. She had been to Oxford on a flying visit, when she ran across one of her old Professors struggling with her suit case and some other articles of luggage in one hand, and her lunch in another! It is hardly necessary to describe the feelings of embarrassment

of these people have when they come across Indians under such circumstances!

It is not surprising, that contemporary satirical English literature of the period found a fairly frequent, if not favourite, theme in the morals and manners of the retired Anglo-Indian officials who were not easily re-absorbed into the placid English social stream. They, with their orientalised tastes, their adaptation and imitation of Indian habits and manners, were looked upon as some strange species, not fit to be admitted into the social circles; and though Macaulay was guilty of gross exaggeration when he referred to some of them as people with a "bad heart and a worse liver," the words were not altogether untrue, in the case of some of these "Nabobs." Thackeray has also some interesting references to these types.

To the unhappy and indelible reaction on English character and outlook, Mr. Molony (I.C.S. retired), bears witness in his work "A Book of South India." "Nowhere else in the world, so far as I am aware, certainly nowhere in the western world, is it possible and easy as in India for the stranger to dwell in a strange country and yet so entirely apart from it. I know many in India who have lived in India longer than I have"—and Mr. Molony was out in India for about three decades, and he has become immortal in the annals of the city of Madras, whose peculiar water-supply during the past years used to be known as "Molony's mixture"—"yet who cannot exchange a word with a native of India in his own tongue." But why should they, when there is the ubiquitous butler and other numerous menial functionaries that flourish like mushrooms in

the Anglo-Indian social landscape, who have succeeded in mastering the English language a trifle better than their masters do the Indian dialects, and who by their limited vocabulary, assisted by histrionic facial expressions, interspersed with obsequious bows and many an "Yes, Sir," — manage to make themselves understood to the dullest of their masters! "In the self-centredness of English society in India may be found, I think," says Mr. Molony in a belated mood of self-inspection and frank admission, "why so many years of an Anglo-Indian life, are the years which the locust has eaten," though the greatest tragedy is that the victims are hardly aware of it for a long time. "Gaiety in India is linked to gaiety," says this writer (Mr. Molony), "till in the end all gaieties become an unending effort to maintain the fiction of England in the East" — how far it is purely a *fiction* now cannot be easily decided, — "to put behind one thought of the time that must intervene and be endured ere exile be ended." ("A Book of South India": C. Molony.) This same peculiarity is the subject of Sir James Caird's comments. "It is singularly illustrative of our rule, that the people for six generations," — the number has increased since this person wrote — "have known no other. We are still strangers among them. Our representatives come and go, now faster than ever, and we and they look on each other with distrust," — when some of them do *look* on the Indian! ("India and the Land and the People," Sir James Caird, 1883.) What was spoken half a century ago is more true of the conditions now, as a result of the revolutionary changes in the means of communication, so that it is so easy — nay fatally easy — to "come and go." In fact a good many of the English people have

time only *to come and go!*

Thus as the long and glittering Viceregal cavalcade, in its dazzling magnificence, its gorgeous durbars and levees, its official dinners and state evening parties and garden parties, appearing as if it had just stepped straight out of the time of the Great Moghuls; as this magnificent and slow-winding procession of Anglo-Indian rulers, the later day representatives of Caesar, moved majestically along the exalted stage at the Indian Capitol, and the smaller pageant of provincial satraps flitted across the less stately platforms, with all the fanfare of trumpets, the shining insignia of office and other glittering paraphernalia, clothed in a commanding style which would eclipse the trumpery tinsel of an Oriental potentate, wrongly reputed for his incurable weakness for display; typifying, representing, and concentrating in themselves the boast of Anglo-Indian heraldry and the pomp of bureaucratic power, beginning with the great Machiavellian Proconsul, Hastings; the well-meaning but ignorant Cornwallis; the versatile, conscientious, Francophobe Wellesley; the genial Scotchman, Lord Minto; and Lord Hastings, "by profession a soldier, by trade a courtier, by occupation a spend-thrift," who was accompanied by an official assignee to receive and administer his splendid salary attached by his numerous creditors; the benevolent Bentick, the Afghan-bitten Auckland; the soldier-politician Sir Henry Hardinge; the young, hard-working physically-decipient, but mentally-agile, Scotch nobleman, Lord Dalhousie; the shy, balanced, and refined *Christian* Governor-General, Lord Canning; the cold civil-servant Lawrence; the charming, good-natured Irishman, Lord Mayo, whose interest in prison reform cost him his life; the wealthy



financial expert Northbrook, the visionary — professional diplomat Lord Lytton; the daring, imaginative, liberal-minded Lord Ripon; the tactful Lord Dufferin; the mediocre Elgin; the grandiloquent, versatile and imperious Lord Curzon; the generous Chelmsford, the imperturbable, courteous, diplomatic Lord Reading; and the noble-minded twentieth century Marcus Aurelius, or better St. Louis, Lord Irwin, with “an untidy appearance, strong forehead, large eyes, flexible mouth, with a long well-shaped, rather pallid face, with a countenance suggestive of certain shyness and melancholy friendship and deep religious feeling;” — as this imposing array of figures flitted across the exquisite Anglo-Indian theatre, *the proscenium with its glorious racial curtain has remained absolutely unchanged*, and in some cases a few judicious touches have been given here and there to keep it in an unfading, attractive, and brilliant condition, in striking contrast to the ugly, poverty-stricken, and drab Indian surroundings of the resplendent racial theatre.

*The Influence of the late war.*—The late war has directly and indirectly influenced the racial problem in a variety of ways, *morally and materially*. Morally it may be said to have compromised irretrievably the European superiority till then flaunted openly and accepted as almost unquestionable by the East. The sight of the western “Christian” nations indulging in an orgy of destruction, and of a relapse to primitive barbarism, showed how flimsy and superficial were the claims to superiority of European civilisation, how thin and deceptive the veneer of western culture was. It was no longer possible to adopt that air of moral superiority which was quite common during the pre-war days. Besides undermining the moral superiority

of the West in many ways, the war also had other profound reactions on the racial problem.

From the *economic* aspect the war was not without its significance. It tended to bring about a serious lowering of the standards of life, of the productive efficiency of the belligerent countries. Japan and some of the eastern countries have not been slow to take advantage of these chances. Japan had already struck a powerful nail in the coffin of western imperialism by the defeat of Russia. She had been making a determined effort to capture the Eastern markets with remarkable success. The way in which she is progressing in her commercial expansion, must give considerable alarm to the English imperialists. No doubt, it is full of ominous possibilities. Mere tariff discrimination is not going to solve the situation. For, even if the duties are raised very high against the Japanese goods, it does not make the position easier for the English. For one thing, it is not easy or possible to exclude the Japanese altogether from the Indian markets. Her prices are so incredibly low, that European countries can never hope to compete with her in that matter. Japan seems to have studied the Indian conditions well, and she seems to have directed her resources towards turning out goods at such a price as would be within the reach of Indian masses. The way in which Indian markets are flooded with Japanese goods is one of the most astonishing things of the present time. This factor has a subtle reaction on the Indian mind. India finds a self-governing country, a small nation with limited natural resources, like Japan, one of the most progressive countries in the world. She has outstripped India and all the Eastern countries in a surprisingly short time. Natural-

ly the people in India are inclined to ask whether she also could not have done the same if she had been a self-governing country? That there are fundamental differences in the character of the people, in the size of the country, the nature of the political and social and religious problems that both are called upon to face, would be apparent to all. But all the same, the example of Japan is a challenge to her, reminding her of her helpless and inferior position in the existing conditions. Thus she is made to feel the *sting and the humiliation of the whole situation more glaringly*. While the example of a free country like Japan is rather humiliating to her in one way, her example has also given the inspiration in another. It is not possible to deal at length on the many different ways in which the example of Japan has affected the present condition. That the "Yellow Peril" is an ever present one among the Anglo-Saxon nations is very obvious from their foreign policy and defence measures. The hopes of India have been very much raised by the policy of Japan.

But there is another indirect result of the Japanese menace. Even granting that England succeeded in excluding Japanese goods from the Indian market, that is not going to ease her position. Under the shelter of the wall of protection Indian industries will spring up immediately, and the effect on Britain's commercial relations with India will not be materially improved. If there is good-will and mutual trust, perhaps it may be possible for the English still to retain considerable share of India's trade. *But only if there is good will*. But if the English people are thinking in terms of the attitude of the Editor of "Daily Mail" and of others, that India is an exclusive English pre-

serve from where all others are to be shut out, then the prospects of retaining the friendship are rather remote, all the "safe-guards" and vested interests notwithstanding. So the need to treat Indians in a more *decent manner* is rendered very urgent from the *economic side*. Perhaps this aspect is going to influence some of the English more than the other moral and humanitarian arguments. The sly movements of the Japanese Jackal in the Indian fields seem to have awakened the serious fears of the British Lion about the safety of the Indian Lamb! In this connection I cannot help recalling a very humorous remark of a certain Japanese gentleman to my sister, when she was in Japan seeing the country recently. Discussing the conditions in India this Japanese friend remarked:—"Why don't *you try us for a change?*"

The war has exerted a profound influence on the racial problem in a variety of subtle ways. The post-war industrial and economic changes and depression in England, the increased taxation, the keen race in armaments which has imposed a severe strain on national budgets, these and others have rendered the efforts of England to retain her pre-eminent position extremely difficult.

Even from the purely *physical* point of view the war was not without its disturbing reaction on this aspect of the matter. The splendid and heroic services which the Indians performed during this crisis in the different theatres of war, served to enhance their reputation. But at the same time the emergence of a new class of hybrid population, by the promiscuous mixture between the Indian and other coloured races with the women of the continental countries, particularly of France and of Belgium, which later on created

a serious post-war problem for the statesmen of Europe, served to undermine the basis of superiority on which the westerners prided themselves so far. There are other indirect ways also in which the Great War has altered the whole outlook on the nature of the racial relations.

If the Great War has destroyed the moral basis of European superiority, the post-war developments have not conspired in any way to rehabilitate it. The chaos in central Europe, the unrelenting persecution of the Jews, the repulsive display of brute force on many occasions by the various European powers, the unprecedented slackening of the marriage ties in Europe and in America, the brutal lynchings which are not an unfamiliar feature of American life, the treatment of the Asiatics in the various parts of the British Empire, the acute and exasperating racial struggle in South Africa, these and other movements of an allied character have been in no small measure responsible for the steady deterioration in the ascendancy of western culture in the estimation of the Indians and other Asiatics.

Nor has the modern *cinema industry* in any way helped to restore the general tone of European eminence. While the "movie" and "talkie" corporations have been, till now, declaring enormous profits, from one aspect they have been bartering away Western position for a "mess of pottage." In spite of the rigorous censorship that is said to exist in the cinema world, one can venture to state the opinion, that the general impression created in the minds of the "Asiatic" audience by these films, has been extremely prejudicial to Western moral supremacy. It is unnecessary to dilate on this obvious point.

Thus the general trend of these post-war tendencies

and developments in the world — economic, political and cultural — has been to shatter the comfortable and complacent, and the hitherto powerful and unquestioned, dogma of western superiority. The chances of recovering the lost ground appear very precarious. Nevertheless the glorious company of Conservative apostles and martyrs, and the gallant and devoted band of militant "Die-hards," and the vociferous crew of Jingoists, continue in their incurable obsession about the success of their policy based on ethnic, political, and cultural pre-eminence. With a mad race in armaments, which all the "Disarmament Conferences" have not succeeded in eliminating, with increasing taxation and dislocated industry, it is rather hard to imagine how England could succeed in maintaining her past unique position which has been mainly responsible for the perpetuation of the feeling of racial superiority, and not in a few cases, of arrogance. The immediate results of the "Disarmament Conference" seem to be a big increase in armaments! The latest news from Europe show that the different countries of Europe have entered into an insane race in the manufacture of arms. When the final spark that will set fire to this huge depot will be lighted, nobody is in a position to say at present. But the materials for the conflagration are being collected with feverish haste. Germany is introducing compulsory military training and conscription. Italy is following in the same footsteps. England is building "super-dreadnoughts." Japan is very busy with her army organisation though some of her civil departments are languishing for want of funds. France is defending herself at an enormous cost with the most expensive devices against bombing. The condition of Europe seems like that of a man pos-

sessed of an evil spirit, mentioned in the Gospels, who was cured of the complaint for the time being, but who had to endure the presence of more evil spirits who coming back found the "house swept and garnished." Though there may be suffering and unemployment in the other branches of industry, the armament factories are working overtime and declaring good profits. Such is the kind of superiority that India is called upon to admire in the West! Europe to an "inferior" Asiatic looks like a veritable jungle where the beasts of national animosities, of economic jealousies, of racial rivalries and political hatred are allowed to roam freely. It has been remarked by an English writer that the foundations of European civilisation are built on gun-powder. The person who made that comment is stating a veritable fact. For, that is unmistakably one of the foundations of European culture. Alice in the Wonderland might say that it is love that makes the world go round, but it is racial hatred and animosities that provide just at present the momentum to this insane career of destruction. It would be interesting to find how England and other Western countries are going to parade their air of superiority in the moral and intellectual spheres in the presence of the "backward" eastern lands like India in military uniform! Of course the Indian might applaud the trim appearance of the military serjeant. But when the serjeant puts on high moral airs and brags of his superiority in other spheres one cannot but think that there is something fundamentally wrong some where in his make-up.

The peace of Europe, according to a recent pronouncement of Mussolini, rests on "bayonets." A typical illustration of Western and Christian superior-

ity! During the sixteenth anniversary of the original fighting troops he spoke in that strain to the "Black Shirt" organization — the colour is significant. One can see the scientific experts of the civilised European countries which claim superiority over the eastern ones working in their laboratories to perfect the engines of destruction, to discover a poison that would wipe out hundreds of God's creatures in a minute, and maim others for life. Such are the manifestations of Western superiority! "For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword," said Christ. But the modern followers seem to be wiser than their Master! Europe is now a huge powder magazine — the age of the sword has gone, and that of bombs has come in — and a few more sparks as the late war, would completely bring out its complete destruction, — a fate not altogether undeserved. And India is also indirectly and unwillingly dragged into the vortex of European politics, into this European charnel-house.

*The growth of political consciousness among Indians.*—The gravest danger threatening the feeling of English racial superiority from inside the country, seems to be the rapid growth in the *political spirit* and outlook of the people of India. This is a new, startling, and powerful factor. It is very doubtful if the English people have really grasped the significance and the extent of this change. In the case of the people staying in England, it may be said without serious fear of contradiction, that they have hardly understood the profound nature of the changed Indian mentality. Some of the administrators in India may have read correctly the signs of the times. But even they are so much absorbed in their departmental duties and outlook, obsessed by their narrow interests and



prejudices, that is open to question, if they have been able to follow and to sympathise with the new Time Spirit that has come over India. If the English had the slightest suspicion of the existence of the new spirit that is pulsating through Indian life, they would not have dared to use such abusive epithets like "naked fakirs" and others. Some of them still seem to be living in an old and comfortable mental world of their own. They seem to be familiar with the picture of the listless and anaemic figure of the Indian who used to get frequent prescriptions and some occasional injections at prohibitive rates from English doctors for curing his chronic complaint. But since he has lost all faith in the ability of the foreign physicians to cure him of his troubles, he has by a system of self-discipline overcome that nervous complaint. The educated middle-classes are no longer content with the "mendicant policy of their ancestors" as it has been well expressed. The Indian political dogs are hardly satisfied with the stray bones that fall or slip down from the slender, and often inhospitable, Conservative and other Imperial tables. The victory of the Swarajists during the recent elections shows which way the political wind is blowing. Some of the more discerning among them seem to have realised this. In one of the many amendments moved by the Marquis of Lothian during the discussions on Indian Constitutional Reforms, there occur the following interesting words:—"inasmuch as it is the mark of a self-respecting and self-reliant people to shoulder the burdens and responsibilities of their own government." ("Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform," p. 505.)

This revolutionary change in the political outlook is bound to have its immediate and intimate reaction

on the "racial" question. It would be quite obvious to most of the English people in India that with the development of a vigorous political consciousness and the strong desire for self-government, the field for the display of a feeling of racial superiority is seriously curtailed. The triumph of Indian nationalism at the polls recently has added significance, if not piquancy, to the situation. National self-respect, like patriotism and other sentiments, derives greater support from persecution. This is a lesson writ large on the face of history. It was the persecution of early Christians that helped infinitely the spread of Christianity. Like the plant which is supposed to grow more vigorously the more it is trodden under foot, so also national and racial self-respect thrives with opposition and persecution.

Though some of the English may desperately hope and try to find a permanent or temporary refuge in their fragile ark of "safe-guards," the prospects of continuing in that insecure position are not very bright. No community has so far succeeded in flourishing *except on the friendship and the goodwill of its neighbours*. The earlier some of the "superior" Englishmen realised that the conditions are unfavourable for their attitude, the better for all parties concerned. In the revised Instrument of Instructions from His Majesty the King-Emperor to the Governor-General of India, dated the 15th March, 1921, there occur the following words:—"For above all things it is our will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament . . . . . may come to fruition to the end that India may attain its true place among our Dominions." At the Final Session of the first Round Table Conference in January 1931, the Prime Minister

said:—"Finally, I hope, and I trust, and I pray that by our labours together India will come to possess the only thing she now lacks to give her the status of a Dominion amongst the British Commonwealth of nations — what she now lacks for that — the responsibilities and the cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the *pride* and the *honour of responsible self-government*." But the "pride and the honour of responsible self-government" will not be realised, as long as there is the *racial pride* of the English always acting as an irritant. The earlier the English realised the days of their "racial glory" are numbered the better for everyone.

After all the value of India for England is mainly *commercial*. If there is no mutual tolerance and understanding between the two parties — and these can only arise from a feeling of comradeship and equality — it is rather difficult to see how the English are going to be benefited by these Indian conditions. Nothing is more fatal for the prosperity of commerce than the absence of a spirit of trust and confidence. Credit is the very basis, the life blood of commerce. But if the people of India have no faith, or if they nourish feelings of resentment at the treatment received from the English, and if the Englishman refuses to step down from his high racial pedestal, it would be interesting to see how the English would compel the people to extend the hand of co-operation in business matters. "Commerce is the equaliser of the wealth of nations," observed Gladstone. It is also the equaliser of the *prejudices* of nations. "Commerce tends to wear off those prejudices which maintain distinction and animosity between nations. It softens and polishes the manners of men.

It unites men by one of the strongest of all ties — the desire of supplying their mutual wants,” remarked Robertson. But in India it has not so far succeeded in removing or reducing the large stock of racial and national prejudices.

“The Joint Committee of Indian Constitutional Reforms” dealt with the different types of *discrimination* which may be directed by the Indians against the activities and interests of the English in India. They were broadly divided into “administrative” and “legislative.” Whatever classifications the English may introduce, and whatever preventive measures may be contemplated in advance, it looks quite plain that unless there is *the spirit of trust and co-operation, mutual respect and friendship*, there is very little chance of these “safe-guards” bearing any fruits, except those of irritation and ill-will. Unless there is a desire to treat the people of India *more decently*, all the elaborate safe-guards are going to be useless. Perhaps some of the English may retort, “after all, you are a subject race. We are the conquerors.” Perfectly true. But should that fact or relationship be allowed to blast their feelings of humanity, corrode their finer instincts, prevent them from behaving less rudely towards their fellow-beings, though with a different pigment?

It cannot be denied that the present racial muddle has partly arisen from the tendency of the English people to look on the “governmental machinery,” on the administration, as something like a sacred institution, not unlike the way in which a Brahmin views caste system. The brown bureaucrat also catches the tone, and he also shines in borrowed administrative feathers. In democratic countries like France and England, the status, the outlook, and the obligations

of the *civil servants* are something different from what one finds in places like India. A person's worth is not determined, and his social position is not in any way enhanced, by the fact that he happens to be in government service. But in India, there is a very deplorable gap between the governors and the governed, which is very seldom completely bridged, a fact which has serious social consequences in many ways. It is this *Brahmin caste of officials, white and brown*, that has contributed from the administrative side to the present state of affairs. In this administrative or bureaucratic heaven in India, there are different and well-marked stages, as in the place mentioned by Dante in his "Divine Comedy." This is one of the most artificial aspects of the existing system, which breeds a feeling of contempt for others not in service, and which is inclined to look upon themselves as a *superior caste*. It is amusing to watch the conduct of some of these minor bureaucratic deities before the higher gods. The administration appears like a human pyramid. It would be interesting to know if there is any other country in the world besides India, where so much respect is shown to the official classes, an attitude which is not always conducive to national self-respect. The administration has been trying by different ways from the early days to set an *artificial value* on service under the Government, so that it may secure the "prestige" necessary to maintain the big difference that divided the two parties. The judicial and executive powers of the Collectors are not separated because "some kind of general authority is necessary for the Collector's 'prestige,'" says rightly Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. ("The Government of India," p. 202.)

"One hears of "prestige" in official India until one is thoroughly sick of the word," says the Premier, and when it is paraded in India, the public is *equally sick* of it! "If the official would only sit down for half an hour," — would his "*prestige*" allow him to sit for such a period? — "and, leaving his preconceived notions on the one side, try to climb out of the deep mental rut into which he has sunk owing to the frequent use of meaningless words, he then might understand something about prestige." But some of these people would find themselves absolutely uncomfortable like the blind creatures which are transplanted into a very sunny and bright atmosphere quite suddenly. "His idea of prestige," continues Mr. Macdonald, is that "he must be allowed to do as he likes, that he must show the strong hand in government, and restrain the strong hand and the kind heart as being weakening; that he must stand no nonsense. He may be known to drink numerous whisky pegs in his club and his general character may be shady. He may be known to be biased in his judgments and to hold the 'native' in contempt," as not a few of them do. "But he does not consider that these things, the subject of endless comment and gossip outside, have any influence on his prestige." (Idem: P. 154.)

But this false and mischievous sense of "prestige" has done incalculable harm to the story of racial relations and even for the administration. It has given rise to many delusions and false estimates of the value of their own position. This aspect has not escaped the attention of Mr. Macdonald. For he says:—"The greatest of all the delusions under which our officials live is that while they are distrusted by the professional and educated classes, they are regarded by the unedu-

cated villagers as their friends and protectors." But this delusion is an imperial one and not merely Indian. One who just tries to follow the chorus of Conservative politicians and publicists on the matter can see this. According to them, the English are the constant protectors of the interests of the poor and of the "Depressed Classes." The Indians seem to be constitutionally incapable of any feeling of kindness towards their own fellow-men; where as the English governing classes who have not seen them at all, in whose welfare they had only an academic interest till now, have developed a very strong interest in their welfare, which however reflects creditably on their feelings of charity! The truth contained in the following words of the Premier can hardly be denied. "That the villager salaams and tells the sahib that his presence is like the sun and his justice like the decrees of Providence, is a fact. But all this goes but a short distance in endearing the official to the heart of the villager. The Collector sahib remains the Collector Sahib, *an outsider, a foreigner, one to be flattered undoubtedly, one to be used when there is occasion,*" — and in India occasions are too numerous — "but all that amounts to very little, to infinitely less than scores of self-satisfied officers imagine. The official hears nobody talk behind his back, and this is more necessary in India than in many other places. He is always warning other people against the polite duplicity of the Indian, but he accepts as gospel every salaam offered to himself." (R. Macdonald: "The Awakening in India," p. 156.)

This sense of "prestige" on the part of *all ranks and professions*, not only among the civilians, among the English, has served to keep the existing gulf very wide.

It has prevented the drawing together of the two sections. The separation is favoured by other forces also. "In so far as the official is conscious of the gulf," — it is not always he is aware of the fact — "*between him and the people, he excuses it, and by far and away the most valid excuse he offers is that his work has so changed that he finds it more and more difficult to keep in touch with the district.* The reports he has to supply are on the increase; his clerical work absorbs all his time. . . . The work of the collector is keeping him apart from his people. We are trying to combine the spirit of the king with the genius of the clerk." (Idem, pp. 156-7.) The present political situation adds further difficulties to the task. "The aloofness of the administrators partly arises from the worship of efficiency rather than popular approval and control says R. Macdonald. ("The Awakening in India.") "The English people believe that they can do and actually do better than what the people can do. But is there any basis for this assumption? The answer is given by an Anglo-Indian paper, "The Pioneer." "What after all, is the state of British Indian District that we should concern ourselves with forcing the condition of differently administered territories — the editor has been comparing the conditions in the Native States and in British India — "up to the same level. Are the people of Howrah or Cawnpore in any way really better off or happier than those of Kandesh or Balaghat?" "When "The Pioneer," says that, what more need be said," says Mr. Macdonald. ("The Awakening in India," p. 160.)

"But I dispute the principle itself," remarks Mr. Macdonald. "Efficiency is not better than self-government," and peace and other material blessings



are not to be compared with self-respect and liberty. "The *superiority* of the personal manners of the official, his autocratic ways of doing things, his idea that he should do for India what he thinks best for India, arise from the assumption that efficiency is what India wants and needs. *If men were machines that would be all right, and the mechanical excellences of our government would settle all disputes about our rule.* But men have pride, will, self-respect," — individual, racial, national — "and consequently a Government inspired by the idea of efficiency will never be acceptable," — except to themselves — "and its officials never be gracious," concludes Mr. Macdonald. ("The Awakening in India," p. 161.) The Indian, like the Englishman, does not live on administrative bread alone. He is anxious to secure control over the constitutional machinery, to find more room for political self-expression. In his view the period of constitutional tutelage, of administrative apprenticeship, is over, and he likes to take over charge from the guardian who had been managing his affairs during the period of his minority, with great care and success. The doctrine of efficiency is all right as far as it goes. But there are higher things than this, and unless the administration has some vision of these there will be room for bitterness only, political and racial. One cannot describe in sufficiently strong terms the unfavourable effect of this on the racial problem.

But in this the *brown bureaucrat* is as much involved, is as much a party, as the white one. The obsequiousness of the ignorant and poverty-stricken villager to the officials, even to those in the lowest rungs of the huge ladder, has resulted in increasing the racial presumption of the English. But those days are gone,

or are rapidly vanishing. Although from the financial point of view, government service may not be so very unattractive, still from the other points of view the people are not so much enamoured of it. The tragedy of the situation is that other professions, equally useful, in some cases more, like those of the doctors, teachers, and engineers in *private employ*, etc., are not treated with the consideration and respect that they intrinsically deserve, and that they seem to get in most of the other countries. Here the government servants monopolise the honour, the prestige, and the emoluments leaving the others at a disadvantage. This feature is not without its tragic reaction on the whole national life, on the racial relations also.

There is another important factor which has contributed towards the development of the present state of affairs. It may be said in defence of the conduct of the English people that the vast majority of them find it impossible to *settle down permanently in the country*. In the case of all other conquering nations both in India and outside, they used to be absorbed gradually into the indigenous population. The Aryans, the Scythians, the Huns, and even the Mohammedans, to a very large extent, were gradually assimilated into the indigenous organisation of society and life, with some changes in the character of their institutions. But the English people, unlike the Portuguese and even the French, refused to succumb to the pressure exerted by the vanquished country. They refused to be drawn into closer association with the people of the land, their culture, and also their civilisation. They received generally their inspiration from the home base. They returned to their country after staying for some time here. So, while the other classes of conquerors used

to mix somewhat freely with the people, often marrying the women of the country and adopting their ways of life, the English did not adopt the "native" ways of life, except during those early stages of English contact. This fact has been to a large extent instrumental in preserving the big racial and social gap between the two parties. The usual "trans-Indian" outlook reacts on racial relations with a great force.

What Macaulay remarked exactly a century ago about the great value of India as an excellent market for English "broad cloth" and "cutlery" is a very shrewd business proposition; only the character of the goods has changed. India is still the largest market for the sale of English goods. "The best way to touch an Englishman's heart," — as the heart of many other nationalities and individuals — "is through his pocket," it has been humorously remarked. It looks as if that is going to be exemplified in Indian conditions also. In India the political awakening has greatly strengthened the desire for economic independence which is summed up in the word "swadeshi" and in the boycott of all foreign goods, British and non-British. The "swadeshi" movement is the counterpart of the political movement for self-government. But the economic and political movements have greatly *quickened the self-respect of the people of the land*. If the Indian masses have been mainly responsible for setting up in their high places the English racial divinities, their subsequent downfall and dethronement will be effected by the same agency. Given the same fair conditions, there is nothing to prevent an Indian from adopting a higher standard of living. But the top-heavy administration, the burden of military charges, which every fair-minded English administrator has

condemned as too heavy, — and it would unnecessarily swell the size of the book if all these opinions are reproduced here, — the other administrative and political difficulties, the inertia of the Indian masses, these and others are some of the serious problems in the way of a better adjustment and improvement of the conditions of Indian social and economic life. However, this *economic factor* had a very great influence on the character of the racial relations. It may be stated safely that, next to colour prejudice, it is the *poverty* of the country, the hopeless economic conditions of the overwhelming majority of the people of the land, that have strengthened the belief in the superiority of one's own standards of life, and consequently also racial pride. While a higher standard of living has been accepted as axiomatic in the case of the English people, as an indispensable condition of the superiority of western civilisation, the prospects of continuing in that complacent creed are hardly assuring. The present day economic movements have shaken the basis of that economic pyramid.

There is yet another factor that ought to set the intelligent section of the Englishmen thinking. The foundations of this citadel of racial eminence of the English are being undermined not only by the political and intellectual forces and movements that now agitate India and the East, but by the present day *economic tendencies and developments*. The countries of Asia, like Japan, China, and India are becoming rapidly industrialised. The markets for English goods are becoming narrower and narrower. The standard of living in European countries is high in comparison with that in Eastern lands. This is only as it ought to be. But there is also the great danger connected

with that, arising from that, and threatening that. When India becomes more industrialised, as she is bound to do, whatever may be the nature of the speed of the process of industrialisation, and the obstacles in the way of progress, and the unfortunate evils attendant upon a policy of that type, the demand for English goods, in spite of all "Ottawa agreements" and similar "trade pacts," is bound to decline progressively. The fate of the Ottawa agreement in the recent discussions of the Indian Legislative Assembly is highly significant in this connection. With the different Dominions trying to foster their own industries by shutting out wherever possible all competition from outside countries, even from the "Mother country," it is hard for Englishmen to find markets for their goods. Thus with the progressive industrialisation of India the market for English goods will automatically decline. "The loss of America only increased our commerce with it," said J. R. Green, the delightful historian. It may be said without fear of contradiction that a better feeling of political relations, a more gentlemanly conduct, would be more profitable for the English people than all the host of ordinances and safeguards and military establishments. England can never *compel* India to buy her goods. She may try her best to force the goods on the country. But if a good proportion of the people are determined on boycotting the goods *as a protest against her racial treatment*, it would be interesting to find how in the long run — for a short period she may manage to enjoy some temporary advantages by different expedients — she is going to maintain her position and to improve her commercial prospects. Not all the weapons that the English may brandish out of their armoury of

"repression," some of which were forged long ago and have become a bit out of date, could resist the thrust of the sharp and simple economic weapon which India is rapidly forging on the anvil of national consciousness and pride. The sharpness and temper of the weapon would be influenced greatly by the nature of the English racial outlook.

The present Indian economic situation is greatly complicated by the fact that Japan and other nations are keeping a close eye on Indian market conditions. The visit of the English Textile Mission recently is a highly significant fact in this connection. It is important not exactly for what it did or failed to do. It is highly interesting just for *the mere fact of the visit*. A decade ago a step like that would have brought on a fit of political apoplexy to some of the Conservative politicians in England! That the English businessmen should have condescended to visit this country, when they used to pull the strings very conveniently from England in the past, is a significant comment on the way in which the political and economic winds are blowing. Some of the members of the Mission realised that it was a great climb down for their *prestige*; for on more than one occasion they affirmed in public that the last word in the matter rested with the English Parliament, as if they had some doubts in their own minds about that fact! Equally interesting was the recent failure of the Government of India to get the "Ottawa Agreement" ratified by the majority in the Assembly in spite of the able defence of the Government spokesmen. Commenting upon the "White Paper" proposals Sir Austen Chamberlain once observed, that "on the contrary, he was convinced that the proposals offered the best prospect of increasing

British trade in India. The *prospect* is attractive to the English view perhaps from a distance; but the course of *actual passage* is likely to be less pleasant, particularly because there are many submerged racial and political rocks in the Indian waters. Whatever may be the final verdict on the achievements of the Non-Co-operation movement and the ideals of Gandhi which a less prejudiced posterity will evaluate more correctly, there can be very little room for differences of opinion on the matter that this movement has been primarily responsible for stirring up the feeling of political consciousness among the masses in India. Though like Sinbad the Sailor who had to carry the "Old Man of the Sea," the people of India had been sustaining the heavy *racial* weight of John Bull so far, they do not seem to relish the prospect of bearing up this precious burden for an indefinitely long period. Nor are the educated classes likely to suffer this present racial humiliation without constant protests and occasional attempts at retaliation when they get a chance. In proportion as India gets more political power, the English in India must find the present state of affairs more and more embarrassing. Thus from the *political side* also the forces working in favour of an adjustment of the *racial relations* are steadily gathering in momentum. Whether the white Anglo-Saxon commercial ovum of the seventeenth century, from which slowly and imperceptibly emerged the pompous military caterpillar in the eighteenth, which in turn passed through slow and gradual stages of evolution into the busy administrative chrysalis, and finally into the iridescent *racial butterfly* during the nineteenth century, buzzing amidst the sultry, but expansive administrative gardens extracting whatever

honey there is, would find with the menacing approach of Indian political winter in the twentieth, the environment of the apiary as congenial as before, remains to be seen. But it would be quite an interesting sight to watch the movements of this papilionaceous creature as it is affected by the rapidly changing climatic conditions here!

*The low standard of life.*—One of the most important causes, if not the most important one, for this feeling of superiority is the fundamental difference in the standards of life between the two sections of the population in India. Into the causes of this unhappy phenomenon it is unnecessary to enter now. Various estimates of the wealth per head of the population have been given by eminent writers and economists, Indian and English. In India the estimates range between Rs. 30 and 40 per *annum*. In Western countries the figures are so high that there is no comparison between the two. In America the difference is still more glaring. Sir William Hunter, one of the greatest historians and administrators of the latter part of the nineteenth century remarked that 40,000,000 Indians go through life with insufficient food, a good many getting just one meal a day. "From thirty to fifty million families live in India on an income which does not exceed  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  per day." ("The Awakening of India," R. Macdonald, p. 102.) This is not a work dealing with economics, and it is not necessary to bring in further facts and authorities to show the fact that is so obvious to all, namely, the chronic, grinding poverty of the country. There is poverty in every land. But it is doubtful, that, with the exception of certain parts of China, whether there is any woebegone country as India. Yet it sounds like



a mockery when some of the people harp on the prosperity of India under English rule. It is too big a question to be discussed within the compass of this work. All that one would like to state in this unpleasant connection is that it is the *poverty of the land* that has exerted the most powerful influence in depressing the *racial ambitions* of the people. It is hard to see how the Indians would have tolerated this racial humiliation, if they were economically well off. It would have been impossible for the English to parade any air of superiority under the circumstances. This has a many-sided reaction on the problem. That the English people are more considerate towards the well-to-do sections among the Indians is a significant fact which reveals the fundamental and basic connection between the economic and the racial problems. All the foreign travellers have commented on the grinding, indescribable poverty of the land. "India is always the land of famine," said Sir Richard Temple half a century ago. Though the terrors of absolute famine are gone, famine conditions continue to be more or less chronic in certain parts of India, in spite of the attempts of the administration to deal with them. But poverty is the lot of her peasant sons, not so much of its administrators. It is not necessary to dwell on the racial significance of this purely economic problem. It is almost a misnomer to speak of a "standard of life" in India in the case of the villagers, of about 80 per cent. of its population; for among the ryots there is only one uniform standard, which may be aptly called the "*standard of starvation.*" About eighty per cent. of the population do not live. *They just exist.* What R. Haggard said in another context may be applied to the case of the villagers in India,

that "it is the case of the land being supported by men, rather than men by the land!" Mr. Winston Churchill spoke recently in a very feeling manner of "the helpless millions and hundreds of millions living on the very margin of existence." But does he really know the reasons responsible for this state of affairs? With the causes of this miserable state of things one is not now concerned. It has been justly remarked by an English administrator that "the Indian ryot will be a perpetual monument to the failure of Christendom," of western supremacy in India. Those who wax eloquent on the glories of English achievements will find this a rather hard and unpalatable proposition. It is a bit difficult to agree upon the causes of this dire poverty, which according to foreign travelers is a phenomenon that is peculiar to the Indian conditions. The "Swarajist" politicians might attribute it to the persistent "drain" from the country. The Anglo-Indian administrators might be ascribing it to the chronic malady in the social and physical organism, which has so far resisted the attempts of all the English doctors. Whatever the causes, the consequences are undeniable. This desperately low standard of living has been mainly responsible for the aggressive consciousness of the inherent superiority of English standards and life. It is this low standard of living among the overwhelming majority of the people, which the blessings of one hundred and fifty years of English occupation have only partly served to alleviate, that has been one of the most decisive factors in forming the view that the Asiatics, particularly the people of India, belong to a lower order, an inferior variety of creation. "We have put down widow-burning, we have sought to check infan-

ticide; but I have travelled hundreds of miles through a country peopled with beggars and covered with wigwam villages." (Russell: "My Diary in India," Vol. I, p. 195.) It would be interesting to hear what some of the English see when they travel now. The contempt of the English people for the people of India who live on "rice and curry," as an eighteenth century lady remarked, has not altogether disappeared from among those who live on roast beef. The abnormally *low standard of living in India* has fostered an ineradicable belief in the superiority of the standards of life of the Europeans. Just as the differences in external appearance, in dress, in the variations in the shades of colour produced a physical revulsion, and later a mental estrangement, so also the existence of different standards of life entirely removed from their own, has served to maintain a feeling of strangeness. This attitude is as strong now as it was a century before.

But such an attitude does not seem to be quite fair to the people of the land. For, given the same conditions and facilities and means, there is very little to prevent the majority of them from adopting a higher standard of life. The extensive gamut of human wants which is miserably limited for the majority of the people in India can be enlarged with the improvement in the means of enjoying them. It is only poverty, dire poverty, that stands in the way.

"Stitch! stitch! stitch!  
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,  
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch  
Would that its tone would reach the Rich,  
She sang this 'Song of the Shirt'!"

wrote Thomas Hood. Would that such a poet of

the Indian poor sing a song that reached the ears of some of the English in India. "That some of the indigent among us die of scanty food is undoubtedly true: But vastly more in this community die from eating too much than from eating too little," said Channing. That may be true of western conditions. But in India famine conditions are more or less constant or endemic, and more people may be said to be suffering from the effects of chronic want. "The poor ye have always with you," said Christ. To no country at present are those words more applicable than to India. Anyway, it is impossible to exaggerate the part played by this *economic factor, this chronic poverty, in the racial question.*

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *Need for Adjustment*

It seems to reveal more or less a primitive mental state, a crude, uncultivated condition of a mind filled with prejudices, as unbroken as a piece of land overgrown with tropical vegetation, that some of the English people are unable to tolerate the reaction of the brown or dark tint on their physical and mental retina. Still most of them regard themselves as cultured people! Does such an outlook indicate the mild perversion of a judgment which has attained premature senility? For it has been found that children are not at all repelled by dark colour, but only grown up ones, whose colour prejudices also seem to have "grown up" with them!

It is very easy after all, for the western "*white*" Christians to speak of a "*loving God*." But on *dark faces* He seems to have been extremely unfair. In many cases the "*white*" races have come between the Creator and the brown or dark human images on which His divine love was meant to reflect its life-giving beams, and that sometimes with their message of "*love*," of the Christian Gospel, and of a superior civilisation! If all are God's children, as all the different religions teach in one way or other, and as the English people repeat during the Sunday services, where is the justification for their conduct on other week-days? If all are members of the same human family, children of the same Father, as Christianity

teaches — and Western Christianity preaches — the white European, the yellow Chinese, the brown Indian, the dark African, — if all are equal in the eyes of their Creator, where is the justification for the attitude of some of the English and of other European races? Have not the “white” races, with their conscience apparently dulled by the specious and self-deceptive theory of “trust,” in the guise of which some of the most awful injustices have been done; have not the “superior” Western nations got to render a heavy account before their Creator, an explanation of their stewardship and “trusteeship? That reckoning will be something utterly different from the procedure that now one finds adopted by the Conservative politicians who always harp on the indebtedness of the “backward” races like those of India. If there is any truth in the words of the Apostle which the “white” Christians nominally accept, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever that believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” then there is an urgent need for most of the European races to atone for their past conduct. Or was it only for the *white men*, that *God sent His Son, though as an Asiatic*? That is the conclusion one is forced to draw from the corporate conduct of the European powers. But if the truth contained in those words is of universal application, then one has reasons to be more uneasy for the western followers of Christ, than for the people of India, and of other “heathen” lands. Is it not a fact that some of the English and other western nations have converted the human temples of God into racial “money-changing” houses, as the pharisees of old, on whom Christ used His whip? One cannot help sending up

a petition to God now and then that at least in the *next world*, the dark-skinned people of India and of other countries may be spared from all such humiliating contacts with the white races as they are experiencing now. In the present world the situation seems to be apparently hopeless. The world, according to some of them, has been created only for their enjoyment. So in the coming existence, the "black" and other "backward" races may be given a separate place, removed from all possibilities of irritating contact with the "white" people!

It cannot be denied that one of the most important facts responsible for this pride on the part of the Englishman has been the *attitude of the people of India*. They provided them with the racial and social ladder and the English have naturally climbed up. It was the outcome of the tendency on the part of the villager and of the labourer and the depressed classes here to look upon a "white skin," an inhabitant from Europe, as a class of superior beings. Generally this proceeded from the native courtesy of the people which welcomes every stranger into their midst and gives him the seat of honour. The Europeans have taken it as a kind of homage to their superior status! In a good many cases there were other motives also influencing the attitude of the ryot. The ill-treatment he has received at the hands of the Indian "high castes" made him look to the English for protection. Thus indirectly, it has been the *vicious legacy of the Indian caste system*, the attitude and conduct of the "high castes," that has created the present tangle.

Further, the Indian villagers find the English living in grand style. Naturally they must be a superior class of people! Thus for various reasons, administrative,

social, economic, the "white skin" is held in respect. But at the same time it is not the memory of every Englishman that is respected or adored. The peasant continues to cherish pleasant memories of the missionary who had worked amongst them for many years, of the English missionary doctor who attended his children while ill, and of a few other classes or professions who had been striving to lighten his burden. He also knows that the "government" is run by white people. Naturally, he comes to extend the scope of his gratitude and respect to the whole body of English people, though some of them hardly deserve any such consideration. The English naturally interpret this as a strong proof of their superiority and of the inferiority of the Indian. That also springs from an innate sense of courtesy to the stranger, and out of gratitude for some of the material blessings he enjoyed, the Englishman does not know or remember. That the conditions have changed and are changing fast, and that the ryot is no longer indiscriminately lavish in his praise of the blessings of British rule, those who are familiar with rural conditions will testify. It was a matter for great surprise to me when I heard very recently some of the Moplahs discussing the political situation. They were going back to Rangoon where most of them were carrying on some sort of petty retail trade. The subject naturally turned on the position of the Indians in Burma and also on the present political condition in India. I started arguing about the benefits of British rule, just to see what their attitude was on the matter. It was the greatest surprise to me to find that all of them — they were illiterate and uneducated in the ordinary sense of the term, though they knew the conditions of the little



world in which they moved perfectly well — were frankly sceptical of the good that the English had done to India. It is unnecessary to repeat here all that they said, but I thought that if some of the Conservatives who were firmly persuaded that they were protecting the interests of the peasant against the encroachments of other parties had heard a bit of the talk it would have done them a world of good. It would have effectively pricked the bubble of superiority and of the theory of "trust" which they seem to hug so closely.

This change, according to some of the English, is the result of the intrusion of the "Swarajist" politicians who have presumed to disturb the perfect understanding that had till now existed between the Englishman and the villager. Thus the peasant finds himself wooed by two suitors. Who will succeed eventually will be decided ere long. But the self-respect of the people of India is likely to grow as days go by. This must inevitably mean that the racial situation also will grow proportionately in bitterness and complexity. The necessity for an early and amicable settlement becomes all the more urgent.

I have not cared to bring in here some of the facts and incidents of past history during the British period which might have the effect of lowering the status of the English in the estimation of the people of the land. Having studied the period fairly well from the military, economic, administrative and constitutional points of view, it is not very difficult, if one cared to, to introduce from the vast historical repertoire a mass of information which might lower the "prestige," of the English. That might only spoil the object in view. Further, *it would be unfair to judge the English by*

*exceptional standards* which no class or administration in the world can maintain. The English have been trying to improve the conditions in India to the best of their ability. But this also does not mean that their conduct in the past and at present has been marked by high ideals of fair play which English writers in the past, and politicians at present, attribute to them. If it is admitted that the English have succeeded in the same way as others would have done, — of course such a position would be challenged by the "Die-hards" no doubt — then there is very little room for this attitude of condescension, patronage, and *arrogance* that one finds among them.

The attractiveness of their past achievements, the permanence of their previous work, these are likely to bear full fruit only if the present superior, and in some cases arrogant, attitude which is quite jarring to the Indian mind is replaced by something more decent and attractive. "Pride of conquest and the innate desire to maintain conquest, must be given up, if past achievements are to bear fruit," says Mr. Byron. Similarly, pride of race, the contempt for the Indian, these and other allied things must disappear completely, if there is to be any understanding and friendship between the two parties without which the conditions are likely to become intolerable.

Perhaps some of the English may ask in all sincerity:—"Are we really proud?" The conduct of many years seems to have blinded them to the realities of the present situation. But the scales are not likely to fall from their eyes as long as the present attitude continues. The rust of pride has in many cases eaten into the frame of courtesy and gentlemanliness. But they will find that during the course of their future

progress in India the path becoming more and more difficult, unless they behaved with *more politeness*. If the English were to harden their racial hearts, the time of reckoning will surely come. With the war clouds in the East, with the growth of other imperial complications, with the stiffening of the attitude of resistance in India, with the increase in racial bitterness here, the prospects of the English are becoming less and less attractive. With India simmering with racial and other forms of discontent, it would be difficult for the English to perpetuate the present unsatisfactory and unjust state of affairs. "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little," says the Psalmist. When the racial resentment and bitterness is gently simmering, when the flame of racial anger is but burning dimly, it would be wise on the part of the English to come to a better understanding with the people of India — even though it may be a bit trying to give the "kiss of peace" to the brown Indian! Or the days are in store when the same flame of bitterness will develop into a consuming fire burning down the racial mansions in the tropics. The boatman dreads even the slightest sign of a cloud in the horizon while he is in the midst of the bay and he is anxious to escape the fury of the coming storm and to get into his haven. Will the English residents take note of these signs of the times? "The one eternal and immutable delight of life is to think, for one reason or another, that we are better than our neighbour," said Mr. George Moore. In the case of the majority of the English in India it may be stated that it is the feeling that they are better than Indians, that has been responsible for the powerful feeling of racial superiority.

It may be perhaps objected that the writer has been emphasising the *political* aspect of the Indian question, and that the *racial* aspect has gradually receded to the background. But in order to expose the fallacy underlying the hypothesis of racial superiority, in order to show its unnaturalness and its potential dangers, it is essential to bring in the other aspects of the problem. The Englishman in India has managed to confuse the issue, to muddle up the different aspects of the problem so long, that it is almost impossible to unravel from the tangled skein of economic, political, social, administrative and cultural knots, the racial thread. In the Indian pantomime, he has succeeded in mixing up the different parts, and hence a criticism and appreciation of his acting in one capacity naturally involves the examination of the others also. When the foundations of the racial mansions the Englishman has built in the tropics are being scrutinised, it is rather difficult to keep apart too nicely the nature of the different wings of the structure. Just as an artist engaged in painting a landscape picture reproduces the general background with a few touches, so also while the general contour of the racial landscape is being described the other main features in the Anglo-Indian historical scenery are bound to appear. The social backwater in which the English inhabitants move about in their spotlessly white-painted racial yachts is profoundly influenced and modified by the political and economic under-currents, by the ebb and flow of the economic and administrative tides with which this racial lagoon is connected; and it is not easy to keep it altogether isolated from the main massive tide of Indian national life which also affects it indirectly and powerfully. Thus it is impossible to keep hermetically

sealed the different compartments—they seem to be all first class compartments—of English social and political life, and some of the other aspects of their activities have been necessarily brought in, but only to the extent of harmonising the general proportions and the true perspective of the racial picture.

It is not uncommon to find a good many Englishmen who have no direct share in, or connection with, the administration, who come here for business and other purposes, betraying the very common habit of identifying themselves with the British Government in India, behaving as if they formed part of the vital mechanism of the thing, when they had very little to do with it, except as citizens and voters, and saying silently "Amen" to the words of the Governor when he says "My Government." Their conduct reminds one of the story of the fly mentioned in "Æsop's Fables," which sitting on the axle of the wheels exclaimed:—"Behold! what a lot of dust do I raise." The illustration used by Oliver Wendel Holmes may be borrowed to make clear what one means. Most of the readers would be familiar with the humorous, but suggestive context, where this occurs in his book "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." In a certain place he says that when there are two people engaged in conversation, there are really six personalities or parties involved. For instance, if James and John are talking, there is John's estimate of himself, James's estimate of John, and the real John known only to his Maker, and something entirely different from the other two. In the same way there are also three entities on the side of James. In the case of the versatile Englishmen in India similarly, there is the governing Englishman, there is the social Englishman,

there is the economic Englishman, there is the Christian Englishman and *gentleman*, who is usually distinct from the others. But often the English "*gentleman*" is almost merged in one or the other of these aspects of his activity, and the gentlemanly part comes to be so overlaid by some of the other views, that there is very little chance for it to assert itself. Thus it is a very difficult task to tackle this many-sided personality. A good deal of the tragedy of the present situation has arisen because of the inability of the English people to *harmonise* these different parts of their character and activities. The situation reminds one of the incident mentioned in the Gospel where Christ is healing one possessed with evil spirits. The varied interests and activities of the English people here are so closely inter-related and so overlapping, that no rigid separation is possible. Thus it is difficult to bring home to the English people in India the nature of the racial situation here, since they have different interests and corporate personalities apart from their individual character with all its idiosyncrasies, thus complicating the whole situation.

It would be abundantly clear to the unbiased reader that the scope of the present work does not include any direct reference to the character and conduct of the British *administration* in India. Such controversial topics have been rigidly excluded from its purview. With the political or economic or administrative and constitutional aspects of the Government's measures and policies this book is not directly concerned. Only some of those measures and developments which have directly or indirectly influenced the nature of racial relations have been brought in. It is mainly with the problems connected with the social life, the racial con-

duct of the English in India that the work is concerned. It is not hard to follow this distinction which has been kept in view during the treatment of the subject. This difference between their "individual," their private capacity and interests on the one hand, and their organised, "collective," and public functions and activities on the other has been borne in mind as far as possible. Similarly, their social behaviour on the one hand, and their private conduct on the other, have been distinguished. Except in an indirect manner one is not concerned with the merits and drawbacks, the successes and failures of their public activities. But as members of a social group they maintained, and still continue to maintain, their own standards, their own conventions and rigid rules. Very few among them would be so unreasonable as to assume the attitude of the French King, Louis XIV, when he said "L'etat c'est moi." (I am the state.)

There is always the danger in commenting on the conduct of the English community in India, that one may very easily stray into other allied fields like *the policy of the administration*. One need not be surprised if these attempts are even interpreted by some people as a criticism of the policy of the administration in the past. But even if the work comes to be viewed in that mistaken and prejudiced light, one is not going to shirk the consequences. It may be objected that it is *unfair* to accuse the English or pride in their conduct in India, although Southey went to the extent of denouncing this very feature in their conduct in a brutal manner. In his "Devil's Walk" he says:—

"Behold a swinish nation's *pride*

In cotton-spun prosperity."

("Poems of Southey." Ed. by M. Fitzgerald, p. 422.)

A sister of mine, an Honours Graduate of the Madras University, whom I had occasion to mention before, told me of a very humorous incident which took place in one of the north Indian cities during the course of her tour. She happened to meet an Englishman there, and during the course of conversation she told him of a few acts of high-handedness which some of the English were guilty of, particularly commenting on their pride, when this gentleman in all seriousness replied that it was unfair to accuse them of this vice, that they were just the opposite, and that their conduct was marked by extreme *humility*, "not the pride of gentility that apes humility," but the real genuine Christian stuff, and that there was no more decisive proof for this than their present unique position in the world, which was but a fulfilment of the promise of Christ, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth"! It was all my sister could do to suppress and hide her amusement at the artless and childish simplicity of the English man who was in dead earnest on the matter! It would be interesting to hear how many of the English people would be prepared to endorse this view. Of course some among them look upon themselves as God's "elect" of the twentieth century!

It is not the purpose of this work to establish the doctrine of *abstract and theoretic equality* between the Englishman and the Indian, between the Asiatic and the European. To maintain the principle of abstract equality would appear a bit absurd at this stage to most of the English residents in India. They would agree very heartily with Edmund Burke that equality, and specially equality with the people of India, is a "monstrous fiction"; with Bentham that it is an "anarchic



fallacy"; with Coleridge that it is an "indefensible proposition," and with Carlyle that it is "a palpable incredibility and a delirious absurdity." In his own usual way he says that it is "ridiculous to equate Quashee Nigger to Socrates or Shakespeare." ("Shooting Niagara.") According to the English view it would be monstrous to admit the equality between the unapproachable excellence of the Anglo-Saxon, with the poor, rice-eating, half-famished brown Indian! Professor MacCunn in his "Ethics of Citizenship" gives expression to a similar idea. "Controversialists can do much but the best of them can no more prove men to be equal than they can show that spirits are triangular." ("Ethics of Citizenship," p. 3.) Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in his "Socialism and Government" says the same thing. "It is not the idea of equality which is underlying the democratic franchise," — although it is rather difficult to follow from his writing what exactly it is that is underlying it. ("Socialism and Government," Vol. I, p. 50.)

The French syndicalist writer Étienne Antonelli remarks in a similar strain:—"Le rève égalitaire est un leurre décevant et déprimant. Il ne répond à aucune réalité. L'égalité n'est nulle part dans le monde." ("Démocratie Sociale," p. 26.) (The doctrine of equality is extremely deceptive in its nature and does not correspond to the realities of the situation. Equality cannot be found in any part of the world.)

But on the other hand, amidst these palpable dissimilarities that are apparent at a superficial view, are there not yet certain fundamental and vital things in common between the different members of the human race — between the Englishman and the Indian? Is

there not the *common denominator of human nature* between them? Important as are the differences of body, intellect, character, appearance, colour, which display men to a superficial view as unequal, do not these differences pale into insignificance before the great and dominating features possessed by all human beings? Carlyle himself, though a very strong political anti-democrat, but a social democrat, expresses this view in his characteristic style. "All men were made by God and have immortal souls in them. The Sanspotato (starving Irishman of the potato famine) is of the self same stuff as the superfineest Lord Lieutenant. Not an individual Sanspotato human scarecrow but had a life given him out of Heaven, with Eternities, depending on it, for once and no second time. With Immensities in him, over him, around him; with desires as illimitable as the Autocrat of all the Russias!" ("Chartism." Chap. IV.) Similarly, the "superfineest" Englishman who lives in India on his beefsteak and beer, or the "superfineest" Scotchman — "the hardy sons of rustic toil," as Burns would have it — living on his "halesome parritch — chief of Scotia's food" as the same poet puts it, and the dirty Indian half-living, and in many cases languishing, on his rice and curry, have many fundamental features in common, which the external superficialities of life manage to exaggerate and to conceal. Beneath all apparent differences human nature is essentially and fundamentally the same, and the "weakest and wickedest" among both the English and the Indians, are in "virtue of their possibilities but a little lower than the angels," and the noblest and most powerful among people of both nationalities — a Sir Rabindranath Tagore, or a Sir Oliver Lodge — "are by reason of

their limitations but a little higher than the brutes."

"We are brought up to believe," — not only to believe but also to subscribe and submit in many subtle and irritating ways to the view — "that an Englishman is by nature superior to a Frenchman, and that an European is naturally superior to an Asiatic. These are mischievous falsehoods," observed Lord Raglan, the famous scientific peer. Coming as it does from such an eminent authority it ought to carry some weight. Of course it is not a very palatable proposition to those who have been brought up in the belief of the superiority of the European races, who have come to regard it as one of the most important imperial bulwarks. This feeling of superiority is woven very closely into the imperialistic texture of English life, and it is also firmly bound up with the thought, the life, of the vast majority of English people all the world over, particularly in the East. It would be interesting to see a few exceptions to this. One is even inclined to lay a wager, as some of the English people have been doing to find a genuine rope-trick player from India! Even Mr. Andrews admits in his book "What I owe to Christ," that this attitude of racialism, common to the English, was also his inheritance, and that it was only his love for Christ that weaned him from that mischievous and unchristian attitude. But I was rather fortunate to come across *one* English lady during the course of the last ten years who was utterly unconscious of any such feeling and she married an Indian! Even a person like Lord Morley "free from all taint of aggressive and narrow-minded imperialism," as his biographer puts it, expressed "a strong *distaste for coloured races*, admitting himself an occidental, inclined to like Mohammedans, but not

prepared to go much further in an easterly direction." (Buchan: "Lord Minto," p. 222.) In the case of a good many of the English people, in spite of the fact that they exist physically in India, their racial sympathies, their cultural interests, their intellectual contacts, seem to stop with the Mediterranean region, although many among them may be prepared to tolerate the colour and sight of a few of the other things which India contains and provides!

"Mortals are equal; their mask differs," remarked Voltaire. A very amusing and true statement. The brown and black masks, or those of other hue worn by the Indians and other "coloured" races are valued at the same price as the white ones in the market of humanity. They are of the same value in the sight of the Creator who is responsible for these variations. But in the white Imperial "Christian" shops they are graded differently, priced differently! "All men are equal, it is not birth, but virtue alone that makes the difference," says the same French writer. But since the European virtue, or rather virtues—they are generally in pairs—are superior to the Eastern ones, there is also the difference arising from that! "In the gates of Eternity, the black and the white hand hold each other with an equal clasp," says Mrs. Stowe. But at the lofty gates of Empire, of the Commonwealth of Nations, the white hand would hardly deign to touch the brown or black ones, with the exception of those of a few rich Princes. "The circle of life is cut up into segments. All lines are equal if they are drawn from the centre and touch the circumference," observes Bulwer-Lytton. But the peculiarity with the social and racial lines in India is that while they are drawn from an imaginary centre,

they seldom touch the outer circumference, and there are no chances of comparing them with the Indian ones which touch the circumference. "All men are by nature equal, made of the same earth by one Workman; and however we may deceive ourselves, as dear unto God is the poor peasant as the mighty prince, said Plato; as "dear unto God" is the heathen Indian as the Christian Englishman. The Workman may be the same, but the patterns are different, and the clay used in fashioning some is certainly superior to those used in the mixture of others! Or as E. Fitzgerald says in "Omar Kháyyám": "Did the hand of the Potter shake?" Evidently, there is some mistake in the proportion of the mixture and the dark colour has become more prominent. Or is it because the white ones are not sufficiently baked in the oven? Quite possible. But the attitude of superiority of the white loaf over the brown one is a bit strange, particularly because the brown loaf is more nutritious than the "white" one! Perhaps some of the readers may be inclined to think that the problem is being treated in a tone of levity. No, far from that. It is only in such a way that the absurdity of the whole thing can be shown. Thomas Paine might say that "all the religions of the world are founded, so far as they relate to men or to the unity of men, as being of all one degree. Whether in Heaven or Hell, or in whatever state may be supposed to exist hereafter, the good and the bad are the only distinctions." Absolutely true, and it may be *exactly* the state with Heaven and Hell. But in the present, living, real *world*, there are a good many comic distinctions permitted, recognised, and even adored by thinking and cultured people! "Equality is the share of everyone at their advent upon the earth,

and equality is also their share when placed beneath it," says one writer, though in a few places in India, there is no equality when people are placed underneath it! But the greatest difficulty seems to be to concede equality while "living" in it. And that by Christian nations, by democratic countries!

"There are some races more cultured and advanced and ennobled by *education than others*; but *there are no races nobler than another. All are equally destined for freedom*," said the great German thinker, Alexander von Humboldt. Destined perhaps, but few manage to reach their destination because of the obstacles placed in the way by other "free" peoples! When the English people "the proudest of Bourbon's slave dain," as Lord Lyttleton said, the question of the Indian slave does not arise. "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," said Thomas Jefferson. In India, as in America, they are not so "self-evident." On the other hand it is the *racial self that is evident!* "Equal Nature fashioned us all in one mould," said the poet. But unequal imperialism and racialism have altered the proportions.

"Eldest of things, divine Equality,  
Wisdom and Love are but slaves of thee,"  
sang Shelley. Equality may be divine but not quite suited to the mundane and exacting conditions in India and in the tropics!

"You see yon birkie ca'd a lord  
Wha struts an' stares an' a' that,  
Tho' hundreds worship at his word  
He's but a coof for a' that!"  
sang the great poet of Scotland. True perhaps of

Scotland. According to Kipling, the poet of imperialism, there is neither "Boader, nor Breed nor Birth," when two strong men stand face to face." Well, in India they seldom come into any close proximity. The Englishman does not generally find his equal to stretch out his hand for one thing. Nor does he seem anxious generally to soil his hands by clasping the hand of an inferior, just like the Indian Brahmin. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" asks the Apostle in the "Epistle to the Corinthians." (1. Cor. Chap. 3, V. 16.) But for the English racial devotees, the Indian temple built out of dirty brown slime does not generally reveal any clear traces of this divine handiwork.

To what extent the sublime philosophy of the ruling classes which the German writers and thinkers like Nietzsche and Treitschke and others expounded, has furnished the inspiration for the philosophy and conduct of the majority of the Anglo-Indian residents here, it is not easy to decide. But one can find an apparent connection between the former and the behaviour of the Anglo-Indian community. The German militarist, H. von Treitschke, the unbalanced champion of Prussian autocracy, describes with unfeigned gusto the fundamental inequality between the members of the human race. (Davis: "The Political Thought of H. von Treitschke," p. 181.) Nietzsche speaks with supreme contempt for the common "vulgar" race of men as "frogs and weaklings." Schopenhauer finds nothing but beastiality in the average member of the "brute multitude."

The equality which the Indian demands may be best expressed in the words of an English writer, who has not shown any remarkable sympathy

for Indian aspirations in the scattered allusions in his writings. "The active principle of social democracy is . . . . . equality. There can be no doubt that the perfect realisation of this principle will involve some radical changes in the structure of our present society, as well as some considerable modifications of our conventional ideas." (Hearnshaw: Democracy at the Crossways, p. 444.) In India it would mean a revolutionary change, and not "considerable modifications." "The attainment of equality," continues this writer, will not mean "it is true, that all men will have the same amount of wealth, that all will exercise the same power, that all will enjoy the same honour, that all will reap the same rewards. Such deadly equalitarianism could be achieved only by so iniquitous and persistent a handicapping of ability and genius as would not only be fatal to progress, but would be the negation of equality itself. It would mean unfair discrimination, jealous partiality, envious repression at every step. You can place people level either at the beginning of a race or at the end of a race, but not at both." Most of the English people in India do not care to take part in the social race at all; and even if they do, it is with a heavy handicap in their favour. "The equality which is implicit in social democracy is equality of opportunity. It means that no one will be debarred by accidents of birth, or sex, or antecedents, or status," and one may add also *colour* — "from entering upon any career whatsoever. It means that hereditary differences of rank will cease to have any significance, and that every one will be judged by his personal qualities, and honoured according to the services which he strives to render to the community. It means that those subtle, absurd, invi-



dious social distinctions that depend on the nature of a man's or woman's occupation will be obliterated; that the doctor's wife will no longer disdain to take tea with the chemist's, that the secondary schoolmaster will no longer refuse to associate with the elementary; that, dare one breathe it — the kitchen as a separate social establishment will be swept away." ("Democracy at the Crossways," pp. 444-5.) In India it would mean, if it means anything, that the white civilian must be prepared to tolerate the presence, and to treat on a footing of equality his brown assistants *outside* the office, that the English businessman can no longer afford to despise his Indian customer whom he quite politely welcomes to his shop — it is amusing to see what all tricks money manages to play with one's manners — but whom he does not care to recognise outside the shop limits. In India it must eventually mean that some of the missionaries who preach on Sundays that in "Christ Jesus, there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian nor Scythian," but acts on week-days as if there was a clear distinction in the presence of God between an Indian and an European would give up the habit. It would mean that there will not be any more irritating notices put up like "European Gentlemen" and "Indian Men." It would mean that one will not come across strange instances of the manifestation of "sporting spirit" as was recently shown by an English club in the South when it refused to admit the equality of the Indian Team in the profits of the usual annual match, where both clubs contribute an equal part to the actual game. A changed outlook would also mean that a few of the scenes that marked the difference in the treatment of the members of the Indian Cricket Team and the English Team during

the last tour of the M.C.C., which evoked a dignified protest from the local Anglo-Indian paper, would disappear. It is indeed pathetic to note that even the sporting spirit comes to be vitiated by the ugly feelings of prestige and racialism.

It may be asked in all sincerity, friendliness, and humility of the English, as to who fixed the present value and pre-eminence on the "white" pigment? Who is responsible for the different shades of colour that one finds in the animate and inanimate creation? Is it not the Creator of the Universe, "God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," as the Christians say every Sunday and on other occasions in their places of public worship? Is *white* a colour after all? It appears from the artistic side a *negative quality* and indicates an *absence* of colour. The present colour values cannot have been fixed by Nature. Nature does not seem to countenance any distinction between one species and another. The white rabbit and the grey rabbit are esteemed by Nature in the same manner. The white lily or the white rose is not more admired than the red or the yellow varieties. Nature and creation do not show any favouritism towards the white colour. Neither does the Creator. In His sight evidently all are alike. That is what Christ came to teach the world. Then how has it come about that a special value and importance, glory and halo have been fixed on the colour of the *white skin*? The answer seems to be that those who cannot stand any other variety, who could not appreciate any other tint, whose rudimentary sense of appreciation was hopelessly restricted to this one shade that have been instrumental in bolstering it up. It seems to be the lack of an artistic faculty, the absence of a wider æsthetic sense than

what one found among one's immediate neighbourhood that has been responsible for the curious mental development of some of the European races. It seems to be more of an infantile mentality which treats its own possessions and qualities as the best in the world! Nowhere does God indicate a preference for the white tint, either in the world of flowers and insect and animals. But in human creation — "the crown of creation" — there is a fundamental distinction between the colour of one and of another. It is not countenanced by God. It is not found in Nature. Reason revolts at such an fanciful idea and preference. Morality denounces it. It is not encouraged by the religions of the world, even by Christianity which is professed by the West. We have it on the authority of the Apostle that in Christ Jesus there is neither "barbarian nor Scythian," dark Indians nor white Englishmen! Then how comes about that such a convention which is repugnant to religion, discountenanced by Nature, revolting to the highest instincts in humanity, how is it that this irritating, unchristian, dogma has been held by the West? Yet it is claimed that mankind is progressing and that it is civilised. It is a "colourful" civilisation no doubt!

The great religious teachers of the world have been drawn from people belonging to the races which are now despised by the English and other European nations. Buddha was an Indian. Mohammed was an Oriental. Confucius was a Chinese. Christ was an Easterner. Yet most of the followers of Christ have the utmost contempt for the people who have more or less the same colour as their Master! Besides, the East has been not merely the home of all the great religions of the world, but it has

been the seat of the ancient cultures of the world. It is from India that the European countries gained their early knowledge of the different arts and sciences, of astronomy, of mathematics, medicine, and of other sciences. The learning of India was borrowed by the Arab traders and through them it found its way to Spain and to other European lands. During the time of the Crusades also there was a good deal of intellectual contact. Thus European learning has grown on the foundations of Eastern culture. Yet Macaulay and the vast majority of English people could find nothing in India's culture that is attractive or admirable! A significant comment on the superior cultural attainments of the Europeans! India was the home of art, the seat of learning, the birth-place of some of the greatest religions of the world. Yet it is interesting to consider the nature of the appeal it has to the vast majority of the Europeans who come to the country at present!

England and most of the other European nations have been so enamoured of their mechanical inventions, so captivated and dazzled by the triumphs of machine over matter, over physical forces, that most of them seem apparently incapable of appreciating anything else but what is found in their utilitarian language. Is it not a nemesis of their commercial pre-occupation, that the majority of the people in the West can apparently follow more easily the language of the counter? The Mind and Spirit do not seem to have received the same attention. Is not Europe now paying the penalty for this obsession with the material things of life, for this spirit of *acquisitiveness*? Their mad race in armaments, their insane national rivalries, their almost incredible de-

votion to the physical comforts of life, — are not all these the nemesis of a worship of the things of the world and the flesh? "The world is too much with us," said Wordsworth. Have most of the English risen from that stage yet? If they really have, then their outlook on the "real" values of life, English and Indian, would have been something different. But as long as this obsession with the material things of life continues in the West, it will do no good for the European nations, nor to the Asiatics with whom they are unfortunately and forcibly connected.

If the world has been created by a just and righteous God, as Christianity teaches, and if its government is controlled by Providence for the exclusive benefit of the "white races" as seems apparently the case at present, then it looks rather unfair that He should have placed in the world *at the same time* the other dark and brown races also, endowed with the same emotions and feelings, with the same capacity for thought and action, with the same noble aspirations, with the same desire for liberty. It would have been quite sufficient if He created the "white races" and some animals for their sport! The "dark" races have certainly just grounds for complaint against their Maker. But if it was the intention of God that all His creatures — even the "little ones" like the Indians, — should live amicably and in love, that this should be a good and happy world, as revealed in the Bible — then have not the "white races" got to render a very serious and heavy account before the Almighty? For the long years of oppression and tyranny and injustice, when the European nations imported slaves from Africa to work in their plantations, when they treated the inhabitants of the "dark" continent and of certain parts of

Asia as human chattel, when can the Western nations sufficiently atone? This aspect of the problem, this unjust riddle of Creation, has often driven me to the verge of despair, and to question the very existence of a God who could tolerate these and similar injustices. Perhaps some of the English may ask:—"What about the 'untouchables' in India?" The same remark applies in their case also, although there is one important difference, *viz.*, that in their case the crime was committed in the belief that it was sanctioned by religion, that there was nothing wrong in it, whereas in the case of the Christian powers, it was just opposed to all the teachings of their religion. India is repenting of it now and trying to make amends. But what of the Christian powers? It would betray great ignorance, greater presumption, and the greatest faith to answer in the affirmative, the question, whether there is a *just* God who tolerates all these, and whether the "white races" are the favourites of the Creator, as they claim to be! In a good many cases the European Christian nations have fashioned a God after their own heart, a racial God, a white God, who despises the "blacks" and the "browns," who has helped them to "smite a pathway" as Kipling says aptly, through the "dark" continents and the "black" regions! "Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?" asked Christ of the Pharisees. The same question may now be asked to the Christian nations of Europe, including the English, and the Americans. One dare not address them as "fools," and so that may be left out. "Did not he that made which is within make that which is without also? Is not the dark pigment made in the same Divine Workshop, as the white variety, or is the white one manufactured in a still

superior workshop? Do they not come from the same human womb, from the same human beings for whom Christ died? Are they not buried in the same earth? If Western Christianity would answer these questions boldly and satisfactorily then there is some chance for it to save its face in the East.

Perhaps some of the English readers may say that *I have been exaggerating the importance of the part played by the skin, by colour, in this racial tragedy.* They might retort that the differences between the culture and civilisation of East and West are not so superficial and "skin" deep. They are to be found in the region of the mind, the intellect, and of the soul. But if it is shifted to that, then it is more easy for the Indian to shatter the complacent assumption of an attitude of superiority. In what respect is the intellectual equipment of an ordinary Englishman different from that of an ordinary Indian? If weighed in the same correct and just balance — not in the ordinary *imperial* balance — which the Conservatives use generally, there will not be any difference. The differences that hide, the variations that deceive, the distinctions that overcloud the real equality, are mainly *external*. They may be seen in the dress, the colour, the language, the diet, the ordinary ways of living, the amusements and other factors which have been dependent entirely on the natural environment, on physical conditions, on climatic differences, on the quantity of sunshine or rainfall that each country gets. The west has specialised in one branch of the racial science, namely, in *dermatology*, that branch of physiology which treats of the skin! It is interesting to see the amount of money spent on, and attention devoted to, the culture of the epidermis, of the skin, in most of the European countries

and in America. The expenditure on face creams, face powder, and other preparations which claim to improve the physical appearance, is prodigious. Next to the expenditure on armaments, and liquor, this is, according to the figures given in an American magazine, one of the leading items of expenditure of the richer classes. A highly significant fact, and one of the eloquent witnesses to the superiority of European culture! But in spite of the culture of the skin — one of the few subjects in which western "society women" can be said to be experts, in spite of this admirable knowledge of the science of colour and artificial beautification; such a *dichromatic revulsion*, this repulsion of the white and brown tints, is a huge international tragedy. If part of the time that people devote to the discussion on disarmament problems could be focussed on this *racial disarmament*, on the destruction of colour prejudices, for killing off the colour bacteria from European minds, — and that after all does not require any great expenditure — then the war clouds and misunderstandings could be lifted with ease.

This colour problem seems to be absent among the animal creation. It is apparently only a problem among the *human beings*, among the thinking, feeling, "rational" members of mankind! For one finds that one dog is not looked on as superior if its colour happens to be white, over another with a grey hue. Evidently dogs have no sense of colour, and men who judge of the colour of the dogs also do not show any particular preference for the white tint, but when they judge of the appearance and colour of another "brother man" they are repelled by the dark colour! Human beings are "rational" indeed! It is only the more civilised human beings that can appreciate the differ-



ences of one tint from another and attach a particular importance to one variety. Whether the peacock despises the crow, and if it does it is because the crow has only one colour, while it has many others — though white is not a prominent one — it would be interesting to know. One would also like to know under what circumstances the present colour heresy, the existing chromatic valuation and colour standards came into existence, whether it was fixed at any international gathering! If it is so, then the president of that meeting must have been an American or an Englishman, one of the Anglo-Saxon races, since in the other European countries like France and Italy this artificial value on the white hue is comparatively unknown. It would be an interesting thing to find out if by a new arrangement, the people of Africa and Asia were "*painted*" white and those of Europe and America black and brown, whether it would be possible to find out the old differences. Then it would be possible to find out the *real* difference between the values of the two colours and of the different races!

That the dark pigment does not always awaken the disgust of the Englishman in India may be seen from his absolute familiarity and intimacy with the Rajahs and Zemindars. Well then, here is another complicating factor. It is not merely *colour* then that settles the matter. For the colour of the Indian Rajahs is of the same dye as that of the peasant. Thus it seems to resolve itself more or less into a question of money. The majority of English people can tolerate the colour of the Indians if there is also *some money in the matter to recommend it*. That is quite an intelligible position to the Indian mind. But the reason for the feeling of superiority however remains a bit inexplicable. Whe-

ther it is a very creditable reflection of the standards of value of the English people, I leave it to the English readers and others to judge.

The equality that the Indians would urge is the idea of equality which is contained in the passionate pleading of Shylock—the best representative of all the down trodden races of the world. “Hath not a Jew eyes,”—and if instead of the word Jew, the term “Indian” is substituted, it would represent the idea admirably—“hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions, fed with the same food”—in India and other places the preparations may be different, though the vitamins contained in them are the same!—“hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means,”—by Homeopathy or Allopathy or Ayurveda—“warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? and if you wrong us shall we not revenge?” (“The Merchant of Venice,” Act II, Sc. 1.) And when some of the English people administer their racial kicks in the tropics does not the Indian feel the pain, the sting, the insult, and the humiliation of it all? Of course most of the Indians, fortunately for the English, do not follow the view of Shylock in this matter where he says, “The villany you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.” Most of the Indians have not yet followed the example set by some of the English in this respect. But the superior Englishman seldom thinks that when he treads upon the self-respect of the poor brown Indian beetle, that it finds in “corporeal sufferance a pang as great” as when a haughty

white imperial English giant dies! It is said that there is a variety of western dancing popular in America called "Charleston dance," characterised by "side kicks from the knee" — where the partners kick the air with all their might. In the case of some of those who take part in this racial dancing here, the kick somehow lands on the Indians! The Indians and other coloured races may justly complain against their Maker, that if they were meant to be kicked by the "white" races, He ought to have endowed them with other sensations than are common to human beings. It is said that "He causes the same sun to shine" on the superior Englishman, as on the brown inferior Indian. One is reminded of the words of the Prince of Morocco in the "The Merchant of Venice,"

"Mislike me not for my complexion

The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,"

To whom I am a neighbour and near bred."

The Indian is not merely "a neighbour or a near bred," but he is the lineal descendant. The comparative scarcity of sun's rays seems to have produced serious results on the mental and physical appearance of Europeans!

The words of Professor Hearnshaw would be somewhat appropriate to the present context. "In the face of the supreme realities of birth and death, in possession of a common human nature, in relation to the universal lot of joy and sorrow, in conflict with the same corporeal and spiritual foes, in contemplation of the same enigma of life and destiny," and one may also add in the suffering of racial wrongs — "all men are equal; and the differences that distinguish man from man, class from class, nation from nation, and race from race, dwindle into imperceptibility. Take

an analogy. If one walks the surface of the earth, one is struck by marked lines of inequalities, that by innumerable grades, differentiate mountain from valley, sea from land. But if one sees a relief model of the earth, constructed accurately to scale, one is profoundly impressed by the insignificance of these superficial unevenness, as compared with the massive symmetry of the whole; while if one gazes at the shadow of the earth thrown on the moon in an eclipse, no inequalities whatsoever are visible." ("Democracy at the Crossways.") If one teaches geography to the lower classes he has to use big maps and pictures, and not small relief maps. Similarly, when one appeals to racial infants, larger mental maps seem to be necessary! "So it is," continues Prof. Hearnshaw, "if one withdraws oneself from these busy haunts of men where the surface features of one's fellows alone can be noted, and if one takes one's place on those heights whence mankind can be viewed as a whole and in true perspective and correct proportions to larger standards." ("Democracy at the Crossways," p. 33.) It is a great pity however, that in the case of some of the English even this withdrawal from the busy haunt of Indian life to the hills during the "season time," when they can view Indian humanity in "true perspective and correct proportions," does not give them the chance to arrive at more fair conclusions. Whose is the fault? The distance is fairly correct. The vision is normal. Evidently it must be the object that is to be blamed!

It is not the purpose of this work to argue that *every Englishman should treat every Indian on a footing of equality*. That would be a thing ridiculous to demand, unnecessary to be attempted, impossible to

be followed. The one object is to draw the attention of the English community in India to the strong racial and ethnic under-current that is profoundly agitating the surface of Indian social life, a circumstance about which the majority of English people seem to be quite *ignorant of*. I am likely to get little thanks for the job at their hands, but that does not matter much. I am only anxious that the present relations should be improved so that they may work for the benefit of all parties concerned. *As long as this racial eyesore remains, there is likely to be very little peace and happiness in India.* The main object of the book is to expose the "white" web of prejudices in which the whole racial question has been so far wrapped up. It is a change of "*heart*" that India is demanding. If that takes place the rest of the external conduct, the outside relations, may be left to take care of themselves. The whole focus of the present racial vision has to be fixed at a new angle. Unless there is a change of racial heart of the English people, the Indians may well despair of the peace and progress in India, and of the Empire also, on happy lines. "Of all acts is not, for a man, repentance the most divine? The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none," says Carlyle very truly. "Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice from the conviction that it has offended God," said Dr. Johnson. It is such a racial repentance that is needed at the present stage. Recently, the Archbishop of Canterbury issued an appeal for prayer on behalf of India. That is a move in the right direction. But it may be submitted in all humility that if the prayer that was offered up is in the usual style that one hears from the English press and platforms, in the style of the Pharisee mentioned in Christ's para-

ble, recalling the many good things that have been done, ignoring or forgetting the many injustices that have been caused at the same time, the sins of omission and commission, in the style of Kipling, then it is doubtful if it would reach as far as the throne of God. Perhaps some of the English may even be horrified at the mere mention of the word "injustices" since they have been so strongly persuaded about the beneficent nature of British connections! But it looks as if it is easy for a brown Brahmin to repent of his past conduct as for some of his English prototypes. The quality of racial charity, like that of mercy is "twice bless'd." "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." It benefits both parties. But the vice of racial arrogance, is a curse to both sides. *It is gall to the victim, and a canker to the aggressor.*

" . . . . We do pray for mercy;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy,"

said Portia to Shylock, and the same words may be repeated in the case of the racial conditions here.

India has been suffering long and complaining bitterly, and often unavailingly, about the burning stigma of racial humiliation, of the restraints of political domination, and of other matters which have effectively marred the course of understanding and sympathy between the two countries. She has been pleading for a more gentlemanly treatment, for a more decent behaviour on the part of the English, since the freedom some of her zealous attorneys are demanding, will not be granted by the Imperial lover. Nor are divorces granted under the existing Imperial rites, as in the Roman Catholic Church. It is a pity however, that when divorces in the West are so easy and com-

monplace, convenient and popular, if not fashionable among certain ranks and professions, when any frivolous cause, like "temperamental incompatibility," or "gross neglect" or "continued ill-treatment" and even the nasty habit of snoring, besides the common plea of conjugal infidelity, has been considered good enough to cut the troublesome knot, the dusky Indian lady, who has more convincing reasons, is not allowed to take advantage of these changed conditions. It seems to betray a deplorable absence of the spirit of chivalry — perhaps as Burke says "the age of chivalry is gone," — on the part of the deeply calculating Saxon sire, who is no longer enchanted by the old attractiveness of the union, but by the purely financial and mercenary side of the transaction. Even if freedom to go her own way is considered impossible at the present time, it is inconceivable why the "white" partner should continue to ill-treat her, to despise her for her appearance. India is demanding an effective redress for this *racial insult*. If the case were tried before an impartial tribunal she is hopeful of winning it. In the highly advanced western countries, any one who contracts a marriage alliance under such circumstances and motives, mainly influenced by the wealth of his bride, and who later on tries to live on it, in spite of their frequent quarrels and the occasional thrashings she gets for her ignorance, her colour, and her supposed ill-breeding, would be naturally regarded by fashionable society as a contemptible fellow. But if the Anglo-Saxon gallant should try to keep under careful control the dower of the Indian lady, while abusing her for the ugliness of her racial and political appearance which dawned on him only at a later stage, his eyes being dazzled and blinded in the beginning by the

glitter of diamonds and of rubies, he must not be judged by ordinary standards by which others are judged. Yet "Brutus is an honourable man," and so are all the dour descendants of the "noble Romans" — a term by which some of the English aristocracy like to be called, the highest compliment that may be paid to the English patricians! "Suffering is the badge of our tribe," says Shylock. Racially it has been also India's portion. What Mr. Ramsay Macdonald says of the relations between the Government and the Hindus in the Punjab may be applied to the relations between the English and the people of India. "Put it as nicely as one may, the best that can be said is that the Government of the Punjab and the Hindus are like two very estimable people with incompatible temperaments who have unfortunately married each other." ("The Awakening of India," p. 42.)

"Society is, indeed, a contract. . . . . It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living and those who are to be born," observed Burke. In India the conditions are radically different and only a "trust" variety has been tried here. The *English caste system and the Indian caste system* have both placed serious difficulties in the way of the realisation of this ideal. But how far this monopolistic Indian administrative organisation, with its many branches and activities and outstations, racial, political, and economic, etc., would lend itself easily and slowly to some urgent changes without altering its distinctive features into a "partnership" basis, for which negotia-



tions have been going on for some time, remains to be seen. Anyway, the experiment is fraught with many difficulties and hardships.

As the queer Dyarchic coach designed carefully by the expert Imperial builders with infinite labour and pain on the old-fashioned model of a Georgian lumbering stage-coach or heavy Victorian brougham, with the necessary structural changes to stand the serious strain of the strange Indian climate and conditions, coated with a fresh shining paint, provided with a few "safe-guarding" shutters, some new blinkers to protect the horses' eyes from the blinding glare of the scorching Indian sun, with burnished cruppers, well-polished and thick strong reins, and a few of the recently patented devices to preserve its delicate balance, with excellent brakes, smooth and imperceptible in their action, that enable it to proceed safely through the newly-opened, rut-covered, winding Indian bureaucratic lanes which are being treated with a thin coating of democratic asphalt, to reduce its jolting and creaking to the minimum, and to remove the possibilities of over-turning; drawn unevenly by an ill-assorted team of astute Anglo-Indian stallions and a few brisky Zemindari colts, inclined to kick and rear from inexperience and unnecessary curbing of the reins, — as this creaking vehicle moves heavily along, the egoistic English equestrian experts regulating the speed according to the instructions from the distant architects; a nicely-paddled and a newly-added place near the box-seat or a few pillons may be assigned to the Indians. But the question of handing over the reins to their untrained hands or of admitting them into the reserved seats inside meant only for the English passengers and *treating them on a basis of*

*equality, appear at present unthinkable.* "As equerries, men of birth and opulence are gratified by being asked to ride in a pageant, or to take their places at a banquet; and the opinions of political outriders are sometimes asked in courtesy about the political weather. . . . But who is fooled by such lofty condescension into imagining that grooms-in-waiting are Ministers of State?" asks Mr. Torrens, M.P. ("Empire in Asia.")

Mr. Asquith thought that "there were people in India who were well qualified to fill high official positions in India, and he affirmed that if high places were given to Indians *half as unfit as were many Englishmen who occupy them*, it would be regarded as a public scandal." "India." (London Weekly) 9th April, 1909. "There are more than 300 million people in India; there are 40 million of us English in the British Isles. We claim to know what is good for those people better than they do themselves. Was there ever impudence more colossal?" said George Lansbury once. But has imperial impudence any limits? "*Because our skin happens to be white we claim more brains than those whose skin has been browned by the sun. Whenever I look at Indians, I feel ashamed of myself.* How can I know more about India than they do?" (G. Lansbury: "Speech at Essex Hall," 11th December, 1920.) But the emotions that most of the English have when they look at Indians are somewhat entirely different! "We (British) would repudiate the suggestion that our Indian Empire is a rule of masters over slaves. Yet we judge as slave-drivers would, and we assess the virtues of our (Indian) citizens as a hunter assesses the virtues of dogs," — as a "shikari" does the virtues

of animals! ("The Other Side of the Medal," p. 118.)

"It is inconsistent with democratic principles that the fate of the Indian people should be determined by an alien electorate and politicians, who, however well-meaning, have no close acquaintance with Indian character, and this cannot but be irritating to Indian sentiment," wrote recently Sir B. Fuller, a former Lieut.-Governor of Bengal. But it is not merely this political tutelage that is unpleasant to the Indian mind, but the more powerful, though generally unobserved, undercurrent of social exclusiveness and *racial arrogance*. It is equally inconsistent with democratic principles underlying English social life, that the English should continue to trample on the feelings of self-respect of the Indians. Perhaps self-respect is only a "virtue" of the European! But the sooner the English realised the resentment, the bitter though suppressed resentment, and the determination of the Indians not to tolerate the situation any longer, the better for the English. The *racial problem is the real, fundamental, all-pervasive, and ominous one*, though the issue is more often fought out on the more spectacular political and economic stage. Dante describes a scene during his march through "Inferno" where he saw bubbles coming up to the surface of a lake which continued to be agitated in a somewhat mysterious manner, since outwardly there was no cause to explain that strange phenomenon. Similarly, the political bubbles that now continue to agitate the surface of Indian national life violently have their origins deeper, partly in the racial, and cultural, and ethnic under-currents of national self-respect — you may even call it *pride* — that are now sweeping through the land, which most of the English people in

India have apparently failed to note and to understand. India may be rightly regarded as the simmering vat, where not merely her own political destiny is being brewed, but where the future of *British Imperialism of western civilisation* and to a certain extent the *peace of the world*, are being brewed; but many of the English brewers are hardly aware of the fact, as they seem to be rather intoxicated by the racial nectar that some of them have been consuming in fairly large quantities!

Meanwhile there are also some profound thinkers among the English who have serious misgivings on the present racial and social situations and developments in the different parts of the British Empire. "For me," says H. G. Wells, "I live in the Empire as a man who occupies a house with an expiring lease," — though some of the "Die-Hards" are apparently trying to prolong the lease and turn it into a Conservative usufruct by different devices. "The Union Jack now signifies neither exceptional efficiency nor exceptional promise. . . . The world would not wait for the British." ("Imperialism and the Open Conspiracy.")

Some of the English people in India might retort with considerable justice and truth, that the Indian is far from being the fit person to cast a stone at them in this matter. Well may they say in the words of the author of the Gospel:—"Thou Hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine eye; and then shall thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye." They might reply with considerable force that the caste system they have been following in India is not a thing *new* to the Indian social soil, that they have only adopted this highly convenient system to suit their political and other requirements in the past; though, even then, there may be room for differences of opinion, whether

it is more tolerable to be kicked by your kith and kin than by a foreigner! There is undoubtedly one exhilarating quality with the foreign style, which seems to carry greater "vim" with it, that it is not possible to follow up the "incidence" of some of those superior kicks, just as in the case of certain forms of taxation!

To the great shame and humiliation of India it must be admitted that the taunt of the Englishman is true. But there are hopeful signs that this festering sore in the Hindu body politic is rapidly disappearing under the combined onslaught of western ideals, and of the reforming movements that have taken root in India. The Hindu social horizon is not so thickly overcast with the caste and untouchability clouds as it used to be in the past. It is to be hoped that with the disappearance of the caste system from Hinduism, its English counterpart also would be hurled "with hideous ruin and combustion down to bottomless perdition," as Milton says in "Paradise Lost."

The English critics might also say that the Indian Christian Churches, ancient and modern, Roman Catholic and Protestant, have pathetically succumbed to the general and seductive appeal of the Indian Caste system. The Syrian Christians of Malabar have been known to wallow in this Serbonian bog of the Indian caste system for a very long period. Even now, some of them, while "*boasting*" of their long and *unpolluted* Christian heritage, seem to hug this false idol as fondly, though not so openly, as before. The *Nadar* Christians of Tinnevelley and of other places — the name is highly significant — have retained all the revolting and unchristian traces of this vicious social heritage from the past. That such a deplorable state of affairs has seriously compromised the attractiveness

and usefulness of the Christian message, and paralysed the strength of the Christian Churches in South India, few disinterested observers would be disposed to deny. But the good sense of the communities is rapidly asserting itself. The movement of "untouchability" initiated by Mahatma Gandhi has been bearing ample fruits. This is a challenge to the Indian Christian Churches and to Western Christianity to shake off their self-complacency. When caste system is disappearing from the fold of Hinduism in India, will it find a permanent haven in the English Christian pale? That would be a comedy indeed! But it would appear that while the people of India are anxious to get rid of their caste system — with the exception of a few fossilized reactionaries — the English are apparently nursing it with the same devotion and care!

If what Mr. Stanley Jones says in his book "Christ on the Indian Road" is true of the present day conditions, then it may be also mentioned that during Christ's patient walk through the urban streets and the rural paths of India, He is gently knocking not only at the Indian door, but also at the door of the English community in India, asking it to renew its allegiance to Him, to remove the reproach caused by the *individual* and *corporate conduct* of the English in India — particularly the latter, to His fair Name. Whether it is because that Christ found the conditions perfect in the West, particularly in the land of Miss Mayo, or that He found it hopeless to make any further headway there and has withdrawn to the Eastern lands — just as He did while alive, to the land of the Samaritans because of the bitter opposition of the Pharisees, or He finds the state of affairs among the nominal western followers and of the people in India more distressing,

it is hard to say. It may be quite likely however, that the people of India would be more hospitable in the matter and give Him the place that He wants in human life. But it would do good to some of the English people out in this land to hear the rustling of His dress, to touch the helm of His garment, as He directs His weary but healing way through the winding Indian rural by-lanes or the wider paths in the cities, where the English congregate in larger numbers.

One cannot help feeling that it is *Brahminism*, not *Hinduism*, but the powerful and baneful ascendancy of the factors and forces comprehensively summed under the term "Brahminism" — you can call it by any name you like — that has been mainly responsible for the present *deterioration of India*, along with foreign domination. This factor has provided the forces from the *internal* side, for perpetuating this grave blemish on Indian civilisation, for the disgraceful and scandalous slur on India's reputation — and it is pathetic to see some of the old Hindu pandits and leaders quoting and expounding the sacred books in favour of their particular favourite obsessions — people who ought to have lived during the *Vedic times*, and who are an encumbrance during the present generation! I hope I will not be understood as being guilty of a sweeping condemnation of the *whole caste of Brahmins*. No. It is only the vicious *system* under which they are labouring, and under which others also are suffering, that I am anxious to denounce. But as long as the Brahmins and other "high" castes hug this false and vicious social idol, they can never hope to rise from the foul-smelling slough of the caste system, and India cannot hope to rise to nobler heights of greatness. As long as this festering

sore continues in the Hindu body politic, as long as this crying scandal is tolerated in the Hindu fold, preventing all real progress, the foreigner will naturally point at us an accusing finger, and India can never hope to occupy her rightful place among the nations. It is superfluous on my part to appeal to the Hindu leaders to re-double their efforts to root out this evil which has sapped their vitality, favoured their degeneracy, encouraged our disunion, prevented our progress. But as long as the existing conditions are tolerated, India must remain the laughing stock of the rest of the world. Every nail struck in the coffin of the Indian caste system would mean a similar process for the English caste system also. "We have to work out, our social salvation as quickly as possible "with fear and trembling." "The Wages of Sin is death" says the Bible. That by reason of our sin of untouchability we are daily courting economic death, is exemplified by a letter received from a correspondent in Rajputana," wrote Mahatma Gandhi in the "Harijan" on 20th April, 1935. "Religious values have to change," observes Gandhi in the same article. The scale of human values in India must be fundamentally modified, and then there is hope. With this domestic and drastic reform of the curse of untouchability, of the Indian caste system, there would be a steady decline in the powers of resistance of the English system. It is to be sincerely hoped that the higher castes who have a grave national responsibility in the matter would do their bit to remove this foul stain from Hinduism, as earnestly and quickly as possible, and not take shelter under the authority of some of the antiquated writers!



## CHAPTER XIX

### *Need for Adjustment—continued*

After all, there are *two* important and basic *principles* which have to be kept in mind, but which people are apt to forget, or inclined to omit, when instituting a comparison between the conditions in one country and those in another. For one thing, the materials chosen for forming a comparative estimate must be more or less of the same class of people with a general similarity in their incomes, their standards of life, their level of culture, and their general outlook on life. It would be wrong and misleading to compare the standard of conduct, life and morality, among the "depressed classes" in India, with the kind of life and morality among the richer and well-to-do classes in England. Yet this elementary, fundamental, indispensable rule of the game is violated by a good many of the English people — and they are all fair-minded gentlemen! — who compare the conditions in India with those in the West. Secondly, it is also *unfair* to compare the conditions prevailing in a small country with those in a continent like India, with its dazzling contrasts and incredible variations. But the unfairness of the procedure is often lost sight of by English writers, though a few fair-minded scholars like Sir John Malcolm had protested against the iniquity of the whole thing. One might perhaps compare the conditions prevailing in a continent like Europe excluding Russia, with those in India.

Further, it is not a correct procedure to compare the conditions in a poor *agricultural* land like India, with those of a rich *industrial* and advanced country like England. The habits of the people, their interests and outlook on life, are likely to differ. Finally, the culture, the outlook, the intellectual atmosphere of an *Imperial state* and people cannot be compared with those of a "*subject*" country or race. The English writers can never divest themselves wholly of the feeling and attitude that they are the conquerors, and that their code of morality and standards of judgment are entirely different from, and inherently superior to, those of the "native babblers." What the Germans would say of "supermen," seems to be true of the outlook and behaviour of some of the English people! Indians and other Asiatics are all members of an inferior race. That the English outlook is moulded by such influences can be easily seen from their newspapers and from the utterances of politicians, which are not brought in here for want of space. The temptation of some of the newspapers in England to single out the unfavourable aspects of Indian life, and to compare them, sometimes by implication, with the favourable aspects of their own as well as of other countries, has to be deplored very much. A good many of the critical grape-shots that whiz out through the port-holes of "The Times" or the steady fusillades of the "Daily Mail," have only done harm to the sense of fairness and proportion of the English. From the heterogeneous mass of Indian conditions it is not at all difficult, even for a dull and unimaginative politician or writer, to pick out such materials in abundance as would favour his pet theories and views. But when some of the English politicians and publicists are so keen on

the game — and there are a few enthusiastic American recruits also — it is not in the least difficult, nay it is fatally easy, to obtain materials for a sinister campaign. This is rendered worse by the fact that in some cases facilities may be denied to the other party or parties to refute the statements. The leading newspapers and other organs of publicity may be controlled by one group. After all, everything is fair in love and in war, and some of the weapons that a few of the newspapers use in England are not very clean or fair in this journalistic war. The picture of Indian conditions that some of the English newspapers give is a seriously distorted one, often a gross caricature or a travesty of existing conditions. The opinion that Mr. Ramsay Macdonald expressed two decades ago is not altogether irrelevant to the present day conditions. "British news and the Anglo-Indian newspapers occupy a most unenviable position amongst the *mischief-making influences in India.*" ("The Awakening of India," p. 131.) *The part that some of the newspapers have played in the racial tragedy in modern times is very unfortunate.* "Any one with an intimate knowledge of British affairs who finds himself in India will probably be amused at much of what he sees in the Anglo-Indian press by way of opinions, but his hair will stand on end at the cables sent each day for the enlightenment of Indian readers on British affairs. The news is often unimportant; the information is as often as not quite accurate; *political leanings are apparent.* *The Indian news sent over to us is of the same kind.* This work of transmission, though of such supreme importance to both Indians and ourselves, seems to be entrusted to an office boy of Conservative leanings without much Conservative intelligence, and

one comes across the most grotesque opinions in consequence." ("The Awakening of India," p. 131.) The conditions about which the Prime Minister wrote have evidently disappeared. "Two members of the Anglo-Indian press have been conspicuous for their offensiveness, so conspicuous, indeed, that had the Press Law been impartially administered in India the editors of both would have enjoyed the privilege of calm rejection within prison walls. I refer to 'The Englishman' of Calcutta and 'The Civil and Military Gazette' of Lahore." (Idem, p. 129.) Happily for India, the traditions have changed somewhat. This is particularly the case in the South, and if the Anglo-Indian press were to maintain a high standard of justice and fair play like "The Madras Mail," a good deal of the preliminary difficulties in the way would be over.

What Sir John Malcolm said a century ago still holds good of the Western outlook towards the Indian question. "I cannot think, that if all the *ranks of the different communities of Europe and India were comparatively viewed, there is just ground for any feeling of superiority* on the part of the former." It is quite likely that when Sir John Malcolm wrote, the political and racial telescopes at the English observatories were not sufficiently sensitive or polished to the extent they are now. At present it is quite possible to see even the minutest things which used to escape the attention of Malcolm! Or was Sir John too long in India that he lost the true perspective? For one finds that it is people who come to India during winter and "do" the country, that write the most absurdly authoritative works on India! They visit a few places which had been previously arranged by the Railway authorities or by some acquaintances. Some of the places of historic

interest in northern India, like Agra or Delhi, are selected and they finish up with Calcutta or Ceylon. All the time they are surrounded by a cloud of guides, waiters, and other tourists' paraphernalia. They are also sometimes entertained by very obliging hosts on a very lavish scale. They later on return to their native place and publish the impressions they had gathered as absolutely authentic and authoritative accounts of the conditions in India. What is more amusing? Their opinions on *past conditions* are accepted as more reliable than those of the old masters like Malcolm, Munro and Elphinstone. These are all out of date. India has progressed since, though such a tone is often *inconsistent with the views* put forward by the modern writers. They often contradict themselves without getting the real perspective of the historical picture. Some of the amusing patterns that these people weave cannot be fitted into the correct historical framework. But that does not matter. Their accounts catch the eye. That alone counts. Perhaps with the improvements in aerial navigation it may be possible that more authoritative accounts on Indian conditions may appear, since the tourists and writers can record their *impressions from the air*, without any contact with the revolting conditions here! Or perhaps sitting at the wireless it would be possible to get all the information one wants about India to write a book! One comes across a good many books on India these days written by English people and by other foreigners. I was greatly amused while reading through the book "The India We Saw," written by Mr. Cadogan. Here the picture given of India is entirely different from the India which Sir John Malcolm and Sir T. Munro *saw*. Well, whose is the fault? Of course that of the be-

nighted old civilians! The modern writers all give a very *impartial, truthful account, a "plain unvarnished tale!"*

One cannot condemn too severely the attempts of some of these writers to place in an unfavourable light, perhaps unconsciously, the conditions in India. "The present attitude may be said to be correct but unfriendly," observes Mr. Garratt in his book "An Indian Commentary." (P. 108.) But is it a correct one? One finds it hard to follow the significance of the word "correct" there. The ominous part that the Press can play, and has played, in fomenting national jealousies, and in nursing them, is too well-known to be mentioned here. Emphasising the importance of giving correct ideas to the English public on Indian problems, Mr. F. W. Wilson says in his book "Some Indian Problems":—"First and foremost I would urge the need for constant propaganda. Unfortunately, during the Great War, the war propaganda acquired a sinister meaning because of the unscrupulous methods often adopted. One has to remember the ridiculous story of the "Daily Mail" about the German corpse factory for the production of essential fats from human bodies to realise how unsavoury propaganda became in the minds of many decent thinking men. . . . . Public opinion in England is largely formed by indirect methods based on a knowledge of mass psychology. The great English newspapers with their enormous circulation, their provincial branches, and their provincial subsidiaries and imitators, while rarely embarking on a programme designed to inculcate a particular political creed, are consciously framed with a desire to preserve the *status quo* and to cater for the average taste of the public. . . . . Week by week

during the last two years I have carefully studied the English newspapers from the Indian point of view. The main news that is cabled by the responsible agencies and by the various correspondents is *sensational and incomplete*. What is worse, it tends to give an entirely erroneous view of the situation in India. . . . . For the most part the popular press only gives space to stories about bombs, murders, strikes, or eccentric rulers of Indian States." (F. W. Wilson: "Some Indian Problems," pp. 99-100.) "The average amount of interest and knowledge in the average member is deplorably small," observes the same writer.

Not a little of the mischief and irritation of the present racial and political outlook arise from the indiscriminate condemnation of everything foreign — Indian and Asiatic — from their narrow, conventional standards. To criticise correctly and ably one must have an intimate knowledge of the things criticised. But where is the time, even if one *felt the need*, for study and reflection under the stress and excitement of modern life?

"A man must serve his time for any trade  
Save criticism; critics are ready made,"

wrote Byron. Well, to no other class of people is this more applicable than to the people who presume to *criticise the conditions in India*. Often some of these writers are out to make out a case for their party, although any such imputation would be resented by such honourable gentlemen and ladies! Truth is often sacrificed to party interests. Petty things are magnified beyond measure. The whole thing might be entirely out of focus, yet the picture would be accepted as correct. One can easily see the damage, the almost irrecoverable damage done to India's name by

the charitable writings of the American "Christian Lady" who was an "unsubsidized, uncommitted, and unattached woman," indulging in unvarnished tales! In the case of people who wrote a century ago about India, of people like Sir J. Malcolm, there was no need to distort the story. Indian nationalism was unborn. Ideas of self-government would not have suggested themselves to the wildest imagination of the people in England or in India. But modern writings are often sent through the party sieves.

Even if this sinister motive to misrepresent or distort facts is absent, it is not unlikely that the foreigner may be quite *mistaken*, as a result of the desire to cater to the public taste which appears to demand a particular variety of news, often *sensational*. This appears to be the general defect of most of the English writers on Indian conditions who contribute short stories or articles to English journals and magazines. But the general impression left in the mind of the reader is equally misleading or he may fail to understand the true background.

In order to illustrate the monstrosity of the whole procedure, the rotten nature of the view presented to the public, the utterly erroneous character of the conclusions arrived at, with the resulting misrepresentation of Indian conditions, and the injustice done to India's reputation, an analogy may be brought in. If an Indian who had never been to England were to learn of English life from one of his friends who had returned from there, or if he picked it up from a magazine which gave some partial accounts of the conditions of life there, from the reports of the divorce cases given in the papers, from the statistics of the quantity of liquor consumed, from the allusions to



the "grease spot" as Mrs. Asquith once remarked of the bed of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Stevenson, from the number of cases of immoral conduct, theft, swindling, prostitution, and of "scenes" in hotels; how utterly unfair and erroneous will be such a procedure! One would like to know how some of the pharisaical editors would like the picture, how John Bull would relish the stuff! It would be interesting to find from an Indian his impressions of English life, if he had gathered them only from the London "under-world," or from the hectic life of pleasure among some of the London "fashionable circles," or from the "downs and outs" who wandered near the London Embankment in sheer despair with "lean abstinence, pale grief, and haggard care," and gave these as typical of English life! Similarly, it would be interesting to go through the accounts given by Judge Lindsay in his books and writings and accept them as typical of American life! If the people of India accepted the stories of the lynchings of negroes, of the activities of Chicago gangsters and boot-leggers, of champagne baths, of the "petting parties" at Colleges, of the corruptions of Tammany Hall, of the scandals of Hollywood, and other similar things and gave these out as typical of American conditions, it would be interesting to see how Uncle Sam would like the picture! Yet some of the writers like Miss Mayo have been guilty of the same funny procedure, of the same misleading, false, and immoral line of conduct. But the people of England and America naturally think themselves superior when there are some good souls like these to remind them of their superiority by comparison!

It is not implied in this that the conditions in India are *perfect*. No, far from that. But the motives of

some of these people who come to India to write on Indian conditions leave much to be desired. It is the malicious use made of such distorted materials that forms the most revolting part of the whole thing. *The present racial tension and bitterness between the two countries, between England and India, may be attributed in part to the results of the Mayoish campaign.* Almost all the things that Miss Mayo wrote about have been pointed out at some time or other by English writers during the nineteenth century. In fact, there is nothing new in what she said. "What is new is not true, and what is true is not new." But why did her book create such a Pandemonium? That is the most significant, the most mysterious, the most inexplicable part of it. One cannot help coming to the conclusion that there were other interests, influences, and parties working which inspired this American author to tell *all the truth about India*. The circumstances attendant on its publication are very interesting in this connection. But they need not be discussed here. What Mr. Macdonald mentions in his book about the nature of the reports which members of Parliament gave on Indian conditions which were not liked by the Anglo-Indian community in India may be brought in here.

"Pagett, M.P., was a liar, and affluent liar therewith,  
He spoke of the heat of India . . . . ."

"The Awakening of India." (P. 29.)

Miss Mayo spoke of many *other things!* The part played by Miss Mayo and others has been brought in, because that is one of the most unhappy episodes in the story of racial relations. It is very doubtful if the misunderstanding and the *bitterness would have be-*

come so acute but for the action of this writer and others of the same fraternity. There was the general feeling on the Indian mind that there had been an organised conspiracy to discredit Indian aspirations. The circumstantial evidence in favour of such a view is very overwhelming. Some of these facts have been mentioned by the author of "Uncle Sham" and there is no need for me to touch on that ugly topic. The name of Miss Mayo has been brought in just because her writings, more than any other factor, have served to widen the gulf between the two sections. It is doubtful if the air of suspicion with which Indians view the activities of certain sections of the Press in England has in any way died out.

For a good many of the English people who are regarded as possessing a certain degree of culture and refinement, some of the peculiar impressions formed about India from very misleading sources cling through life. These erroneous and prejudiced impressions often create a wall of mental separation which is seldom completely broken down. How violent the condemnation of everything foreign from one's own ideas and institutions can become, was admirably revealed from the *comments* which appeared in a regular torrent in the English newspapers on Miss Mayo's books. There have been very few incidents since the days of the Great Mutiny which have stirred up such ugly passions and feelings of bitterness and vindictiveness as the publication of the books of Miss Mayo. It is impossible to exaggerate the sinister part played by that factor in the story of racial relations in modern times. As the author of "Uncle Sham" says, "The more infamous Miss Mayo became in India, the more famous she

became in other parts of the globe," — particularly in the part occupied by the Anglo-Saxons! "I do not pretend to know what her purpose was nor am I in a position to say who paid for the hundreds of *free copies* that went round West-End and May Fair. All that I can say is that the book did more to damage India's call for freedom than it helped any destitute widow," says the same writer. If one also visited the social gutters of London, and Liverpool and other places, he or she can gather a good deal of appropriate and spicy information to place the English life in a very unfavourable light. One cannot quote better than the remarks of the "New York Times," which in its issue of 20th August, 1929, said:—"If patriots respond to Gauba that this is a large country, and that the examples which he takes are exceptional and few, his reply (already offered in "Uncle Sham") is that India is also large a country to write a conclusive book about." One cannot put the refutation of Miss Mayo's words, and the defence of India, in better words. All that the most "compassionate," though violent, critics of Indian conditions say may be true. But that is not the whole of India.

Miss Mayo's monumental example of clever muck-raking has found many malignant imitators. But these works are not likely to do any lasting good. "She wrote for money," says the editor of the "Tory Record" (U.S.A.), reviewing the book "Uncle Sham"; and this explains her point of view, and her morality, and her horror of Indian customs! She had a good "close up" of Indian social sewers. "Miss Mayo seems to have had a good sniff at the filthy drains in India," said Mahatma Gandhi. Some of the English also seem to have *appreciated* the smell exceedingly!

That is the most interesting part of it. For they have been so far claiming that they had fine conservancy measures and arrangements to dispose of them! Bernard Shaw is said to have approved of Miss Mayo's attempts and to have remarked that "if any Indian feels hurt his revenge is easy. He has only to tell us frankly what disgusts him in our personal habits." But the remedy is not so simple as that. For one thing, it is necessary for such an Indian writer to find an obliging publisher and a patronising public, if his work is not proscribed by the authorities! Some of my readers may be perhaps inclined to think that I have gone out of the way to bring in Miss Mayo into the story of racial relations. One would have gladly left this well-known person severely alone. But she has played a very *unenviable part in the story of present racial relations*. Her writings had the unexpected effect of depressing India's claims considerably. Further, the publicity given to her work and the attention it attracted, show the tremendous importance of the *press* in the story of *racial relations*. On no previous occasion was the power of the press to damage the reputation of a country so clearly manifested as during the few months following the publication of Miss Mayo's books. *These books had the natural effect of kindling the flames of racial antagonism and bitterness* which had been almost extinct since the days of the "Ilbert Bill." Nor is the mischief likely to disappear for some time to come. The Mayoish cobwebs seem to have found a good place in the mental recesses of some of the English journalists and publicists. Unless these are effectively swept away there is very little chance of a better and an honourable understanding between the two parties. What I would like to

emphasise is, that it is this attitude which prevails among the different ranks and professions in England that has profoundly influenced the conduct of the English here. The power house of racial superiority may be found at the different centres of England, and the current is transmitted through diverse channels to India and other parts of the world. One cannot exaggerate the intimate and profound connection between the attitude of racial superiority as manifested in India and *the tone of imperialism* — economic, political, and racial, — which may be found in *England*. The waters of superiority which irrigate the fields in India are controlled by the sluice-gates in England. "The dark foundations deep" as Milton says in "Morning of Christ's Nativity," of racial superiority reach beyond the Indian clime.

The close and mischievous inter-relation between the racial and political questions was obvious from some of the amusing, but rabid comments, which appeared on the works of Miss Mayo. I shall single out just a few passages. The readers may be aware of many others. These are not by any means the typical ones. "The book is primarily a tremendous frontal attack upon the whole social system of India in all its aspects, and by implication one of the most powerful defences of British 'Raj' that has ever been written. In a sense it contains nothing that is really new. All who know anything of India are aware, of course, of the prime evils of Hinduism, of the horrors of the child marriage system, of the universality of sexual vice in its most extravagant forms, of the monstrosly absurd brutalities of the caste system" — only as brutal as the *English caste system*, "of the filthy personal habits of even the most highly educated classes — which, like

the degradation of Hindu women, are unequalled even amongst the most primitive African or Australian savages," and *some* of the most civilised among the English and Americans — "of the universal cruelty to animals, and of the equally universal prevalence of laziness, untruthfulness, cowardice, and personal corruption which in the code of "Mother India" are not recognised faults at all." After mentioning the various social crimes and abuses in India, which I have refrained from quoting because they can come with a good grace only from discriminating papers and editors as those of "The New Statesman" — a tone which I have not the ability to imitate — the paper asks in a vein of righteous indignation, of pharisaical self-complacency, and of superior morality:—"Should we leave these hopelessly washed-out, but eternally loquacious Hindus, to their natural fate? Alternately, do we know anything better that we can do? Is it really a good thing that a race of this type should be *artificially* preserved and enabled to breed freely — in their teens — by the 70,000 trained English soldiers whom we keep there? It is a tremendous question. And it is a question which we think that the ordinary reader of Miss Mayo's book will find it hard to answer in the *affirmative*. He will feel that these religious baby-violators ought to be wiped out off the face of the earth, as they almost certainly would be if we withdrew our troops from the North-West frontier. It cannot be easy for the democracy of Great Britain, who are the constitutional rulers of India, to grasp facts of this kind. They naturally cannot believe that men who use the rhetoric of Mazzini are willing, for purposes of ritual, *to eat the excrement of a cow*." Now this superior editor was just guilty of making one of the

wildest statements one can imagine! For there is no one who "eats" cow dung. It is used in so many other ways. But this is the first time when one hears it used for eating purposes! Some of the English public can "swallow" anything! "In short, the whole problem becomes insoluble," says the writer in sheer compassionate despair. "There appears to be no rational possibility of democracy in India. We can take our Army away and thus let the fit, as it were, eliminate the unfit," — it is also not improbable that the Indian "unfit" may eliminate the Anglo-Saxon *fit*, paradoxical as it might sound, if India had the power to do as she liked! — "but it does not seem in the least likely that we can discover any method by which a stable native government can be established upon any other foundation than that of British bayonets. And even then we shall not be able, except in the largest cities, to enforce a minimum of sanitation. *The inhabitants of India, like the white ants, venerate excrement, both bovine and human*, and their greatest leaders fear to challenge their prejudices. What, in such a land can a *white* man do?" Poor white man! Some of these "white" men if they went back to their native place won't have much to *do* either! "Ought he to leave it, ought he to go on trying? Miss Mayo does not attempt to answer the question." As if it was her business to answer any question! She wanted to raise problems for other people like the writer of this article, *imperial* problems! "She merely describes what she has seen, and it is a dreadful picture. But everybody ought to read this book," as if an exhortation like that was necessary for a book like hers! — "because in this matter we are all responsible." It is amusing to follow the line of argument of this



*unbiased* editor. Just a few lines before he was in utter despair of doing anything useful in India, because the conditions were so hopeless. "Chiefly she espouses the cause of baby girls, but the rest of her analysis of Indian social conditions is quite startling and convincing." The lava discharged from the Mayoish crater — not yet an extinct one — and it would be interesting to watch the next eruption — has evidently formed a thick layer on the mental plane of the English and American public, and it is impossible that any good social and moral vegetation would thrive in the environment for another one or two decades. There is very little chance for the flowers of sympathy and understanding sprouting up in this miasmatic atmosphere. But one has to deplore more the *effects of her writings on the English mind*, on the outlook of some of these superior "editors" and politicians. India will continue in her "sub-human" state, while the English people are buried under the intellectual and moral debris of such poisonous ruins!

But there is another aspect of Miss Mayo's descriptions which has to be mentioned in this connection. It is one of the most scathing *indictments* of the present British occupation. That aspect did not strike many of the English critics when they were loud in their praise of the services rendered by this eminently just, vigorous, charitable, and dispassionate critic! In their enthusiasm to expose the claims of India for a more decent treatment some of the English critics over-reached themselves. The pages of Miss Mayo's books furnish the most convincing and relentless *condemnation* of British rule. In their enthusiasm to endorse the statements of Miss Mayo, they are unconscious of the false position in which they are placed. Of course, patriot-

ism can play all sorts of amusing tricks with even eminent people! In one breath they praise to the skies the glories of English occupation. At one time they paint a glowing, exquisite, and beautiful picture of the grandeur of British occupation. But the next exposure is entirely different, and the print taken is completely black and ugly. Writers who indulge in such statements are the victims, conscious or otherwise, of utter ignorance of history, of intellectual knavery, or patriotic foolishness. They betray the most colossal ignorance of the conditions which prevailed in the past. Sir John Malcolm was in India for thirty years. Sir Thomas Munro and Mountstuart Elphinstone lived for over 25 years. These eminent authorities on the past history of India give a very favourable picture of the conditions of the people at the beginning of the 19th century. But after *more than a century of the enjoyment of the boasted benefits of British rule*, the people of India have deteriorated according to the impressions formed from the writings of Miss Mayo and other very eminent and expert critics! The conditions portrayed by Miss Mayo, instead of being an argument in *favour* of British occupation, as the editor of "The New Statesman," "The Daily Mail" and other papers proclaimed, are a terrible *indictment* of the conditions which prevail now. Things have gone from bad to worse. But this is a hard pill for the imperialists to swallow, and one would like to know how they relish it. They want to take the credit for the achievements and to deprive the Indians of the benefits arising from the admission! A very novel and ingenious procedure! Another manifestation of the superiority of English politicians! Munro, Malcolm, Elphinstone, and others are prejudiced old fossils!

Miss Mayo is the Incarnation of Truth ! If this is not a very pleasant conclusion, then there is another *alternative*, namely, that modern writers like Miss Mayo had some deliberate, *propagandist aims* which were speciously draped in the attractive garb of disinterested service for humanity! How it is possible to escape one of these conclusions, the writer and other "sub-human" Indians fail to understand. Of course, the shrewd editors of these and other papers are above such "unsporting" tactics, or such a petty process of reasoning. These people seem to blow hot and cold at the same time. They represent India as a social inferno at one time, and at the same time a heaven created by the English. Wonderful performance! The critical excrement proceeding from the grand intellectual systems of some of these versatile politicians seem to be of the same quality as that proceeding from the houses in India which Miss Mayo described. There is one difference however. In India, the people live in these huts only some part of the day, the rest of the time being in the open. But in the case of some of the superior Anglo-Saxons, they generally carry with them these intellectual offal, these patriotic excreta. Now which is more tolerable? "*She makes the claim for 'Swaraj' seem nonsense, and the will to grant it a crime.*" Here the *real thing* comes out. She has admirably succeeded in making the claim for "Swaraj" look mere nonsense! She has after all succeeded well in her object! The compassionate English politicians and writers have undergone a good deal of mental agony thinking over the horrible conditions to which they had been silent accomplices so far. It is unnecessary to quote elaborately from her writings and from the many newspaper reviews to show that the unenvi-

able part played by this American lady in the story of *racial relations*, in widening the gulf between the two countries, is *incalculable*. Her writings have served to pump further cement into the menacing fissures of imperialism and racial superiority. But the superior editor of this and of other papers are sadly mistaken if they think that the "sub-human Indians" are likely to be wiped out of the face of the earth if the "super-human" English withdraw from the scene. It is unnecessary to follow this unpleasant topic further. *Since the Mutiny, there has been no incident which has stirred up such bad blood as the highly useful book of Miss Mayo*. Not only did it prove a commercial proposition to its author, but it has come to the timely assistance of the British Imperialist when he was finding the Indian problem a bit annoying. But the fruits of Miss Mayo's work have not been gathered completely from the Indian side. The reader will kindly pardon the attempt made to explode the sophistry which supports these Jingoistic prejudices. Any staff seems to be good enough to beat an Indian dog with some of these people! The attitude of the editor of "New Statesman" and of others similarly situated, is greatly vitiated and extremely mischievous. It is against this *arrogant attitude that one wishes to protest*. Such an attitude is the most mischievous, the most menacing obstacle in the path of mutual understanding at present. It watches and tries to make use of any weapon it can seize, in order to discredit Indian aspirations. These methods are bound to fail, since they are based on falsehood, on passion, on prejudices, suspicion and national antipathies. The critical effluvia issuing from some of the English papers are of the same stuff as the varieties so graphically described by Miss Mayo

in Indian houses.

Unless the less prejudiced and more thinking section of the English public exerted themselves and protested against the injustice and the wickedness of the whole procedure, it is not likely that there would be any final and satisfactory solution of the present racial and political problem. They are living in a false world, if they think that the people in India would always submit to these racial indignities.

How utterly prejudiced, how incurably vitiated, even the outlook of those who ought to know better is, may be gathered from the comments of Bishop Whitehead on the book of Miss Mayo. Writing to Miss Mayo he said:—"Take the case of sexual immorality. I do not think that the people of the West are by nature purer than the peoples of India"—that is at least something! "But we in the West have the inestimable advantage of a religion that stands for purity and righteousness." ("Slaves of the Gods," p. 113.) Yes, certainly it does "*stand*" for purity and righteousness. But compare the *conduct* of the people of the West, and how dare they then raise the finger of scorn against the Indian? I am not defending the conditions here. No, far from that. They are pretty rotten. But are the conditions in the West any better *really*? Judged from the higher standards of human morality, and not by the false, specious, and misleading ones of patriotism and prejudice, are they in any sense better? Christianity teaches peace. Look at the followers of Christ, armed to the teeth, ready to fly at each other's throats, to massacre children, to mutilate the healthy, to butcher the innocent. Yet they raise their finger in scorn against the Indian! Look at the immoralities in the West, at the misbehaviour of youths,

at the scandalous behaviour of some of the married and unmarried women in the United States and other countries. Yet they condemn the conditions in India! The conditions in India are bad. But is Miss Mayo the person fitted to show it? Is this the *spirit* and the *way* in which it could be done? Miss Mayo used to preface her remarks with the words, "This narrative is taken from real life!" As if it is difficult from a country like India to get many more like that! It would be interesting to see the "super-human" English and other European nations surviving another war! The "sub-human" Indians have been existing in this condition for ages, and there is very little chance of their being annihilated, unless some of the "super-human" Western governments decided to kill off the whole lot of 350 millions in India and another 400 millions in China and other places, to breed a different race of "super-human" creatures like the race of modern English and German and American and other European Gullivers! It may be asked in all charity to some of these writers, why not the English destroy the whole lot of "sub-human" Indians and Asiatics as they kill off rabbits in Australia, or sterilise them as they do the mental imbeciles in Germany; so that they may have the pleasure of occupying the whole of God's earth, meant for all his creatures? That would be an admirable thing indeed! I used to feel now and then that a Merciful Providence should spare the Indians from the *white* Heaven, to which all good people are expected to be admitted after their death. For the pleasures of their *heaven*, as of the present *earth*, are likely to be spoiled by the presence of the Indian browns and blacks!

The people of India are "slaves of the Gods!" The people of America are the slaves of the God of Peace, the God of Love, the God of Sexual and married purity, the God of Temperance, the God of Racial Righteousness, and of many other Gods! Just as the people of India are "sub-human" as the editor of "The New Statesman" said, so also the people of England, and of America, — the "Trans-Atlantic cousins" — are descendants of "super-human" beings! After reading through the book "Uncle Sham" and Judge Lindsay's remarks, and the accounts of the divorce cases that appear in English and American newspapers, it looks as if the earth is burdened not merely by the millions of "sub-human" creatures in India but of Western "super-men" and women!

There is one fundamental difference between the immorality which prevails in the West, and in the East. In India they are committed, it has been said, in the name of religion. In America and other Western countries it is "against" the teachings of Christ. In India it is against "baby wives." In other countries it is against "unmarried girls." I hope, I have showed enough to the fair-minded reader, that it is *such an attitude* that stands in the way of any *friendly settlement* of the Indian problem, political and racial. The favourite tendency of the English critics to use one kind of critical lens when they look at Indian conditions, and another one while dealing with their own ones, cannot be sufficiently deplored. It is the immorality and dishonesty of such performances that I wish to point out. These attempts close all avenues to friendly approach. Nor are they a *creditable reflection on English standards of justice and fair play*. The eagerness of some of the English papers to make political

capital out of the offensive writings of a woman has been mainly responsible for the *bitterness between the two parties at present*. Many critical English and American dogs have been busy since they got some of the bones which Miss Mayo threw before them. But unless these growlings cease, the chances of a friendly approach are utterly closed. Unless they give up the use of some of the "poison-tipped arrow of the most heinous form of untruth," as Sir Rabindranath Tagore characterised the writings of Miss Mayo in "The Manchester Guardian Weekly" (14th October, 1927), there is very little chance of a better understanding between the two parties.

The whole of the problem of racial relations is profoundly influenced by the *public opinion* of the Anglo-Indian community in India, as also by the nature of public opinion in England and by the attitude of Parliament. At the very opening of his book "The Government of India," Mr. Ramsay Macdonald brings in this all-important problem. He compares the fundamental difference in the public opinion in England and in India. "Public opinion in this country is like a sea upon which the barques of Government float; in India, it is like a sea beating against a coast, being rebuffed here and eating in its way there. Here, public opinion touches and emanates from the whole people, its sections represent conflicts in view of national ends, and it is responsible; in India, opinion is sectionalised in a totally different way. There is the public opinion of the country which is *mainly commercial*, and has in time come to be inspired by the *mentality of a foreign race in possession*. . . . . The public opinion of the British community presents no great problems to the Gov-



ernment, except occasionally, as in the case of the Ilbert Bill, when it displays all the dangers of the opinion of a section in possession animated by two of the most reactionary of all political impulses — *that of a superior race* and *that of an economically exploiting community*. If its sense of security or its political dominance is threatened, it becomes vocal; and then through its press and its connections it becomes formidable, and can control the Government," says Mr. Macdonald. ("The Government of India," pp. 1 & 2.) The part played by the Anglo-Indian Press in the story of racial relations in the past is a rather controversial and an extremely delicate topic into which I do not like to enter just now. But it can be stated without serious fear of contradiction that it was not a part which was *favourable* to Indian claims for justice and fair play. I have no desire to rake up the ashes of this controversy. But its influence was often decisive, carrying off its feet some of the more moderate and reasonable members of the community when it came to a matter of their class or communal interests. As such, it has not played a helpful part in the story of racial relations, though that cannot be said to be the attitude of some of the leading papers *now*. One can hardly exaggerate the decisive part that the Press can play in shaping the question of racial and political relations. It is capable of setting the course in one direction or another. It is to be sincerely hoped that those who are responsible for forming the public opinion of the Anglo-Indian community in this and other allied matters, would acquit themselves honourably and creditably and live up to the fine traditions that some of the papers have been maintaining for a long time. Their

share in the adjustment of the relations is compelling, and no one can set any limits to that. It would be one of the greatest tragedies, if a false sense of prestige, or ideas of short-sighted patriotism, would serve to deflect the vision of those responsible for shaping the opinion of the community. Such a false move would have disastrous consequences on the history of Indo-British relations. It would look presumptuous on my part to draw the attention of those responsible for it to this important matter. But one feels really uneasy at the nature of the issues involved. Though the Indian Press is also not without its share in the problem, it is obvious that on *this particular matter* the Anglo-Indian Press has such a heavy responsibility which would put a serious strain on their powers of keen observation and balanced criticism. They can make or mar the course of racial relations. It is gratifying to note that some of the papers are acquitting themselves creditably in the matter. To mention names would be to make invidious distinctions, but Madras has no reason to feel disappointed in this affair. If the same traditions are maintained in other parts of India, a good deal of the irritation, if not exasperation, would gradually disappear; and that is about the best service that they can render to themselves, to India, and to the British Empire. The Premier has put the matter very effectively at the end of his book "The Government of India." "But the way of Britain is clear; the war has illuminated it," one of the good indirect results of the war. "*Heavy will be the responsibility and terrible the fault* of those who obstruct or darken it," and one is inclined to recall the words of Christ when He said that it were better that a mill stone were hanged about

his neck! — "bountiful will be reward and ample the justification of those who respond to the more generous and trustful emotions which possessed them when Indian troops rode into Flanders," as Mr. Macdonald has expressed it so excellently. ("The Government of India," p. 272.)

It is the firm belief in the *Providential mission of the English in India*, as firm as that of the Indian Brahmin in the inviolate nature of his sacred position, as unshaken as that of the slave-owner in his cause in the past, that is partly responsible for most of the misfortunes of the racial and other allied problems. It seems to be a creed equally powerful and mischievous as the right divine of the Stuart kings to govern wrong. While such an attitude has occasionally sustained the self-sacrificing activities of a few administrators like Munro and Canning and others, and also of a good many of the missionaries; it is also responsible for the delusion of the English governing classes about their peculiar responsibility for India and their determination not to part with this "God-given" right. This belief sustains a few, encourages some, but it deludes the vast majority of the Conservatives, while it is a source of amusement to the people of India and other "backward races" — whether it is that their "backs" have to support all the time the weight of one or the other of the *advanced* Western nations, it would be interesting to know! — who find it hard to understand the partiality of a just God for the Englishman and other "white" races, particularly because some of these have shown little disposition or anxiety to adhere to the terms of any such contract, which like the "Social Contract Theory" of the earlier centuries seems to delude the imagination of politicians. A few indivi-

duals like the late Lord Curzon, no doubt, might have been *sincerely* inspired by a firm belief in this Providential mission. In his admirable biography of Lord Curzon, Lord Ronaldshay makes the following comments that Curzon "was fortified by the belief that a mission and a duty have been entrusted to my country from on high." (Vol. III, p. 391.) But it is seldom that this pure and lofty conception of an Imperial mission, the faith of a Sir Galahad, to which many pay lip homage on Sundays and on other occasions when it is convenient for them to do so in public, has controlled the outlook of the *English people here*. With them it is like a Sunday-suit to be worn on occasions. A similar noble conception of duty inspired Burke also when he raised his eloquent voice — very troublesome to the administration though, — against the oppression of the people of India, and the injustices committed by his countrymen, whose conduct was not properly controlled by a pre-occupied and often ignorant and ill-informed Parliament. "There we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer," observed Burke once; "and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty." "We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called," said Burke in his famous speech on "Conciliation with America." In his "Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol," he refers to "the comprehensive dominion which Divine Providence has put into our hands." But with these noble exceptions, and of a few others like that of Mr. Bright, it is often the philosophy of the counter masquerading under the guise of altruism that one comes across in the utterances and policies of English statesmen. "When you

see a man with a great deal of religion displayed in his shop-window, you may depend upon it he keeps a very small stock within," said the famous preacher Spurgeon once. Similarly, when the Conservative politicians are over-anxious and immensely worried over the prospects of the Indian question because of their passionate love for the Indian peasants, then one has strong reasons to think that there is something more than what appears on the surface. To what extent the Imperial husbandmen have proved true to this "divine trust" is a matter outside the scope of this work. But the judicious juxtaposition of altruism and imperialism, the curious and deft mixture of magnanimity and personal interests, the delicate balancing of party creeds and the general welfare of the Indian masses in the same scale, the easy reconciliation of their sectional and class outlook with the wider humanitarian one, these things seem to be only possible for some of the versatile English politicians! The glorious vision of the gentle Viceregal shepherd laying down quietly his bureaucratic plaid and military crook meant to look after the interests of the princely rams and the peasant goats, to slumber in comfort, which the apocalyptic vision of some of the English politicians and officials conjures up is of such ethereal and dazzling beauty, that the future dissolves itself into an iridescent rainbow mist. But rainbows mean rain!

The solicitude of some of the generous English politicians for the safety of the Indian masses appears somewhat amusing. If there is one tune monotonously piped by the modern English politicians, as if to make up for their past neglect, it is about the security and prosperity of the Indian peasant! How far the peasant feels flattered by these generally academic at-

tentions to his condition it would be interesting to find out. "The peasant has been in the background," — unfortunately he had the privilege of remaining in the *background* for a very long time — "of every policy I have been responsible, of every surplus in which I have assisted in the disposition. The Indian poor, the Indian peasant, the patient, humble, silent millions," remarked once the late Lord Curzon. The author of "Child Marriage" — Miss Rathbone — bemoans in the usual lachrymose imperial style the fate of the 170 million "daughters of the Empire" — hitherto they have been only step-daughters! — in the same way as Lord Wolmer and others bemoan the fate of the "sons of the Empire." It is interesting to note that the recent political developments in India have released the springs of interest and enthusiasm in the welfare of the masses, of the peasants, and of the "depressed classes." Hitherto one heard very little from the English press and politicians about the hardships and the sufferings of these classes. The recent trend of political developments has at least done something useful for them.

Describing the deplorable condition of the women in India, in an equally vivid and touching manner as that of another well-known predecessor in the field, Miss Rathbone says:—"Are we proud of these conditions? No doubt the chief responsibility for cruel customs must rest on those who practise them. But are there not two kinds of responsibility? Primary responsibility for the evils we cause, accessory responsibility for the evils we weakly struggle against." Why the writer just stopped with these two convenient types of "responsibility" it may be pertinently asked? Besides the "primary" and "accessory" responsibilities which

this lady assumes, there are other specious kinds of responsibility which causistical politicians can easily discover like "secondary," "tertiary," "centurial," "millenary," etc., to suit their convenience. But it is the solution that she offers for this that almost takes one's breath away by its novelty and audacity. "Are we satisfied that in these respects British administration . . . . have done the best, the most that could be expected of men who boast that they have been "father and mother" to the "dumb millions," for whose sake some of the modern philandering politicians clamour so constantly — "of India's peasants, and have led their feet into better paths than they have ever trod before?" Then follows the most wonderful and incredible part of the argument. "Then let him (Englishman) ask himself if he is proud of the record, and whether he would be happy to see his nation transfer its responsibility to others, before it has at least placed in the hands of *those whom we have so signally failed to free, the means of freeing themselves.*" ("Child Marriage: The Indian Minotaur," 1934.) This is then the result of the painful political self-examination — whether it has been also "a painful self-introspection, an agonising inquiry," as Carlyle says, it is not known. So it is only to rectify the mistakes of this "signal failure," and to increase the domestic happiness of the "incompetent" Conservatives — "incompetent" by the admission of one in their own ranks — that the ruling classes in England are anxious to prevent any hasty or injudicious transfer of power to the hands of the Indians! Thus they may be enabled to attempt some belated retribution for past negligence! The reasons for retaining control over India are as *original* as they are *amusing*. In the case of some of

the English it is in order to confer on India the blessings of British rule. This attitude is humorously illustrated in one of the ballads written by Henry Torrens, an Anglo-Indian poet of the last century.

"Yes, Bill must go, for see how great our population is  
With anti-nuptial Malthusites in dire dismay,  
Miss Martineau's preventive check, sir, now our salvation is,  
Yet flesh is flesh and blood is blood, say what you may."  
"Thus think no more, my friend of sinecure or chancery,

. . . . .

*We'll humanise the Hindus with our younger sons."*

The present generation of English politicians is not so keen on the task of "humanisation" which deluded the imagination of misguided fanatics like Macaulay and Bentick and Wilberforce. They seem to be more interested with the "industrialisation" and the "commercialisation" of the land.

It is quite amusing to watch the consuming anxiety of the Imperial guardians for their young and weak Indian ward.

"Shall Bolshevik unmuzzled Bear  
Our India's tempting honey-comb spare?  
Won't Afghan Panther leave his lair  
To filch the Peasant's paltry share?"

"The Princely elephants might crush  
The hedge where hums the peasant thrush,  
And Zemindars come in a rush  
To drag him through vile-smelling slush."

"Poor India's Sun of Peace shall rest  
On fierce communal squabbles' breast,  
Japanese Swallows build their nest  
On Indian ryots slender crest."

(Extracts from "A Conservative's Reverie" by the author.)



How the Hertzian waves proceeding from the Indian peasants' huts are received and interpreted at Westminster by the English politicians thousands of miles away is a process which the ordinary Indian finds it difficult to follow. The English politicians seem to come into some sort of mystic communion with the spirits of the Indian masses — it would be interesting to know whom they are using as their "medium," besides some of the retired civilians and gallant ex-colonels and captains, vegetating on an Indian pension. Molière, the famous French dramatist, used to read out his play to his servant woman — whether she was also a bit deaf is not mentioned — and if the play met with her approval, then the great dramatist was sure of a popular welcome. Besides the many retired men it would be useful to find out the sources from which the people in England derive their information. Perhaps the explanation is given by Sir M. O'Dwyer, who once wrote:—"There is no such thing as Indian opinion. There is not even one such as Hindu, Sikh, or Mohammedan." But all this is made up by the Conservative opinion on India!

How far Parliament — "the most self-satisfied assembly of mediocrities" as the author of "Mirrors of Downing Street" puts it, is going to solve the Indian question with its domestic pre-occupations, with its strong racial and imperial prejudices, is an interesting thing to watch. The remarks of the Right Hon. J. M. Robertson may be recalled in this connection. Writing in the "Daily Chronicle," on 22nd April, 1918, he said:—"I affirm that it is to-day impossible for any member of Parliament to study adequately all the questions upon which he is called to vote. After the war, when we have to grapple with a host of new

problems the impossibility will become a source of danger." The same view is also emphasised by the two Archbishops, who in their Report on the Government of the Church (1916), says:—"The congestion of secular business alone is very great, and it appears increasingly unlikely that any government brought into power under modern (democratic) conditions, and overwhelmed with matters that call for legislative action, will have the leisure for detailed consideration of church questions." Even if the distracted and "overwhelmed" Parliament had the *time*, does it possess the required *knowledge*?

The racial situation in India is influenced not merely by the *attitude of Parliament* and the measures discussed and passed there, but also by the *outlook of the different classes and ranks of society in England*. It is difficult to exaggerate the unhappy part played by the conditions in England on the developments in India. The current of Indian racial and social waters is influenced by the political tides, by the racial gulfs-streams, that proceed from the English Channel to the shores of India. The immediate and direct effect of English politics on the outlook of the Britisher in India is profound. Though the racial tree bears its fruits in the tropics, it partly draws its sustenance from the English imperialistic atmosphere. Like the "tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season," the racial tree in India derives its nourishment from these distant agencies. It is necessary to consider in brief the nature of the outlook of the different classes in England on the Indian problem. But it is a rather elaborate and difficult matter. It is impossible to discuss the intimate bearing of the question within the compass of this work in an exhaustive

manner. But one wishes just to point out that there is a subtle, important, and decisive connection between the attitude of the people in England and that of the racial outlook in India. *This attitude of superiority is inextricably woven into the very texture of English institutions*, English policy, English character, English social and industrial life, English political and imperial traditions; and it is hardly possible to deal with the racial relations in India without alluding to the general features of the parent stock. It may be seen in the attitude of Parliament. It is apparent in the life and outlook of the English ruling classes. It seems evident in the dealings of the English *clubs and hotels* towards the Indians. But it appears in a most pronounced, and in some cases offensive, manner in some of the Conservative papers.

From one point of view there appears to be no more dangerous foe for the British Empire than some of the members of the Conservative party. By their intemperate views and insulting pronouncements and provoking language, they have helped in drawing together the bonds of unity among the different ranks and groups of politicians in India. Racial and political suppression will only serve to inflame the spirit of resistance of the people of India. It is hardly possible to dwell too strongly on the futility of force and coercion in the whole matter. Every abusive epithet levelled against Indian aspirations—and some of the newspapers and politicians in England seem to be experts in the art of employing the vituperative vocabulary with the most deadly effect—has forged another link in the chain of unity; and if some of the English people would continue in their philippics for some more time, there is so much labour saved for Indian publi-

cists! It looks like a sad day for the history of England that her destinies during peace times should be shaped also by gallant ex-captains and colonels who are very good in their own way when a war breaks out. But to entrust them with the task of carrying on negotiations for peace is a very curious procedure. Such imperial firemen are perhaps useful to put out a conflagration. But when there is none, they are sure to create one. From the Indian point of view it may be stated truly that England has more to guard against the vigorous activities of some of the English politicians and writers than that of the Indian Swarajists. But they seem to be ignorant of the harm they are doing, being firmly persuaded that they are saving the Empire! What a delusion!

How far the words of the author of the "Mirrors of Downing Street," are true of the conditions now in England, one is not in a position to judge. "We are a nation without standards, kept in health rather by memories which are fading than by examples which are compelling. We still march to the dying music of great traditions, but there is no captain of civilisation at the head of our ranks. We have almost ceased to be an army marching with confidence towards the enemy, and have become a mob breaking impatiently loose from the discipline and ideals of our past. . . . The standards set by the privileged classes at this time are the same standards as ruled in France before the Revolution." "There is no example of modesty, earnestness," this cannot be said of the most of the Conservatives on the Indian question — "restraint, thrift, duty, or culture. Everything is sensual, ostentatious; and shame-facedly sensual and ostentatious." (P. 155.) "We need the Puritan element in our character, the

Hellenic elements in our minds, and the Christian element in our souls," confesses this writer at the very close of the book. But the Puritan element is decidedly out of fashion since the time when Macaulay ridiculed it. The Hellenic has evidently been replaced by the Philistine. The Christian in a good many cases among the prominent politicians seems to be somewhat absent *from this distance*. Mrs. Asquith's writings and letters give some very interesting and eloquent comments upon the standards of moral and cultural behaviour of the English ruling classes during the period of the Great War! And yet, some of these people lecture from their superior heights to the backward, ignorant, "sub-human" people of India! W. E. H. Lecky, one of the greatest historians of England, has some frank remarks on the nature of the lives led by the fashionable ruling aristocracy of England, by those who are called upon to shape the destinies of India. He mentions the "lives of mischievous self-indulgence or scandalous vices." "There are circles where luxury is carried to such a pitch that men almost resemble that strange species of ants, which is so dependent on the ministrations of the slave ants, that it would starve to death, if these were not present to feed it." Evidently, it is some of these strange varieties that have been living on the earnings provided by the brown Indian ants that are most furious at the prospect of giving greater freedom to the people of India! Here it is a question not of India's *fitness or unfitness*, though the problem comes to be shifted to that self-deluding plane, and to be entangled in a maze of self-deceptive altruistic imperialism. They dare not envisage *their* future political winter with the approach of Indian self-government. It is not surprising therefore that there is con-

siderable excitement among some of the fashionable imperial bee-hives at the prospect of conceding a larger measure of freedom to India.

Thus there seem to be *few hopeful signs* of a spirit of racial charity and of political magnanimity characterising the attitude of the majority of the leaders of thought in England and among those who are actually controlling her policy in the two countries. The attitude of the vast majority seems to be more or less reflected in the following words of Lord Curzon:—"At a time and amidst institutions whose roots are buried in the past, and whose history is inter-twined with that of the nation, whose sons have carried its name to the corners of the world and stamped," — pretty heavily in a good many cases — "their own fabric of imperial grandeur, it would, indeed, be strange were there found any acquiescence in the *sordid doctrine* of self-effacement — it may be Christian, but it is "sordid"! — in a policy of national or territorial disintegration, in the new-found obligation to shirk admitted duties, or in the application of the system of a parochial vestry to the policy of a colossal Empire." ("The Conservatism of Young Oxford," G. N. Curzon: "National Review," June, 1884.) But when this jingoistic doctrine, highly popular with certain classes, comes into clash with a similar desire on the part of other European nations like Germany and Italy, or of Eastern powers like Japan, then there is trouble. Similarly, when this philosophy of Imperialism draped in an attractive national garb, in glowing patriotic robes, — and it is amusing to see what all dubious stuff could easily pass through the intellectual barriers, if the whole thing is wrapped up in the rags of nationalism and patriotism — comes into violent contact with the newly awakened

spirit of national consciousness of other Eastern nations — all the more bitter because of the burning memories of past injustices arising from exploitation, carried out in many subtle ways, and even under the pretext of *civilising* them; there is likely to be a good deal of heat generated, and eventually even a conflagration. It is thus easy for any one to see how deeply and ominously the feeling of superiority is woven into the texture of English national policy and outlook.

This aggressive belief in, and apocalyptic vision of, a Divine Mission in India and in the Orient, have greatly captured the self-seeking imagination of a good many of the politicians in England. There is evidently a good deal of halo surrounding this feeling of a "chosen race" of the twentieth century. One has only to read through the poems of Kipling and through the utterances of some of English politicians to see how firm and aggressive the belief in the Divine Mission of the English is at present. Kipling says in one of his poems,

"For the Lord God Most High  
He hath made the deep as dry  
He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the  
Earth."

It is evidently the God of the Old Testament and not the God that Christ came to reveal that has been helping them — if at all — in this highly "divine" task of smiting a pathway through the body of God's creatures! This hallucination has been mainly responsible for the grim determination of some of the English not to relinquish their "trust," since the "smiting" and fighting are not yet over in some cases. *Such imperial creeds*, which, more than anything else, have contributed to the present aggressive and offensive *racial*

*superiority also*, have to face certain awkward questions. The German Kaiser honestly believed as strongly that the German nation had been commissioned, as it were, to spread the German "Kultur." If Germany had won the war it would be interesting to hear what the modern race of "Die-hards" would have to say on the divine right of Germany to govern England! They were within an ace of doing it. Even granting for the sake of argument that Providence in His favouritism for the Saxons, has entrusted this task to them — though it is hard to follow the reasons for this partiality of the Deity for one particular stock — of developing the "backward" countries like India under a special "mandate"; that it is the duty of the English at the present time to "justify the ways of God to man" politically, that they have received this political testament from on High, it would be pertinent to ask in all sincerity as to what the terms are of this "trust"? Are these revealed only to the "Conservative elect" of England? Is England's vigil to last till eternity? Or is it, as in the case of the Mandated Territories under the control of the League of Nations, to end after some time?

For, after all, it is very easy to drag the Deity into the discussion as people are very fond of doing. The Congressmen in India might as well say with equal, if not better truth, that they have been specially commissioned from on High to resist the "white" supremacy. They would be equally persuaded about the sacred nature of that mission as the Conservatives are, and with more show of reason. Some of them have even *denied the existence of the Deity*, because of the present nature of the relations between the two countries, strange, if not blasphemous, as it might sound



in English ears. The great Indian patriot, Lala Lajput Rai, the major part of whose later life was spent in prison for the sake of India's freedom, exclaimed on his death bed that *if there was a just God*, He would not have tolerated the present state of affairs. There are others also in India who are inclined to share his view. I do not endorse it or refute it. But I have just mentioned it to show that there are many people to whom the present state of affairs is unpleasant, and that it is unfair, nay even blasphemous, to bring in the Deity into the discussion, and to try and take refuge under the God-given right which some of the Conservatives have been urging of late to back up the right of conquest.

The Indian question is obscured, not only by this implicit faith in the Divine Mission, but also by a *firm belief* in the *superiority of English character to any other variety in the world*, certainly to anything that is found in India. There are some writers who are more subdued in their treatment of this topic. But the view is wide-spread that the British character is "the finest in the world," as one English writer puts it. It is good to be assured now and then however, that is one of the best that the world has produced. For some of the people in India have begun to despair of any kind of decent treatment in the racial relations from the English side. "The people of England are the most enthusiastic in the world. There are others more excitable, but none are so enthusiastic," remarked Lord Beaconsfield." It is amply borne out in their *colour prejudice* in which they are not lacking in *enthusiasm*.

"There are no hearts like English hearts  
Such hearts of oak they be;  
There are no men like Englishmen  
So tall and bold as they be!"

says Lord Tennyson. Yes, there are no men like Englishmen so *racially* tall! What Macaulay spoke of the "hereditary nobility of mankind" has been repeated in another form by the Poet Laureate. It is very hopeful to find Mr. Baldwin giving recently a glowing account of the prominent features of English character, for the Indian had so far only some chances of having a very confused and blurred vision of the whole thing. "Kindliness, sympathy with the under-dog," — perhaps he must be an "under-dog," or some of the British bull-dogs resent his presence! — "love of home" — which is evidently responsible for disliking the temporary *home* in the tropics — "are not all these characteristics of the Englishman you and I know?" Some of the Indians are more familiar with other varieties which Mr. Baldwin has not evidently come across! "He is a strong individualist in this that he does not want to mould himself into any common mould, to be like everybody else." Perhaps, here we have the reason why the Englishman does not like any polluting contact with the brown and dark loam of the tropics — getting mixed up is out of the question — and demands a place removed from any rude contact with the Indian ones, safe-guarded by some special barbed-wire racial entanglements! "Then the Englishman has a profound respect for law and order," continues this Ex-Prime Minister, though some of them have hardly any respect for other peoples' sentiments and *feelings*! "We can respect the fine qualities of other countries, but let us keep to our own." Evidently, a good many of the Englishmen have not come across during their Indian existence anything to inspire respect in the Indian character, except in some cases, the comforts and attractions held out by the

highly obliging Zemindars and Rajahs for hunting and sport. "With our pertinacity" — which most of them exhibit in an abundant measure, "with our love of ordered freedom, with our respect for law and our talent for combining in service, indeed, in our strength and in our weakness, I believe from my heart that our people are fitted to pass through whatever trials may be before us, and to emerge, if they *are true to their best traditions*, a greater people in the past than they have been in the future." It would be interesting to hear the account of the German character given by Hitler, of the Italian by Mussolini, of the French by its leaders, and of the American by some of its prominent politicians on the anniversary of a great national event or on the eve of an election! Anyway it is gratifying to note that the ideal of British character which has been so eloquently given by Mr. Baldwin, does exist. For, to the people of India, a generally modified, and in some cases quite diluted varieties of this splendid type have been only available for admiration. The contact with the tropical conditions has brought about some peculiarities, which are evidently unknown in England. British character according to the author of "The Mirrors of Downing Street," is "the highest civilising power in the world." (P. 126.) Mr. Baldwin's fine character certificate of his countrymen is a timely reminder to those in India who have begun to feel sceptical about the exceptional qualities of the Anglo-Saxon stock.

These admirable qualities which flourish in the bracing temperate atmosphere, are generally somewhat spoiled by contact with a foreign and trying environment. "There are some among us who will never understand the English spirit," says A. G. Gardiner in

his book "Pebbles on the Shore." When the English spirit is too elusive and incomprehensible to the people in England, it is not a matter for surprise that the Indians have often failed to find out and to appreciate the mystic nature of this peculiar spirit. "The Londoner is a cosmopolitan for whom 'nil admirari' (admire nothing) is not a principle but a birth-right," says Paul Cohen in his book, "England the Unknown Isle." In India this birth-right is always enjoyed, since there is very little evidently to excite their respect. Describing English character this continental writer says:—"The English mask of immobility is first cousin to the Oriental's smile that must never be taken off, under any circumstances. The English ideal of repression is to be blamed for the wrongness of judgments passed on the English". . . . . "The Englishman at the very bottom of his being is a 'non-rational' mystic." "Everything in England is illogical, everything has something to counter-balance it and so avoid extremes, everything tends to correct itself, nothing leads to its logical conclusions." That seems to provide part of the explanation for the racial troubles in India. "The English mind is neither a garden in which nature is subdued to geometry like the Latin mind, or a primeval forest like the Slav mind," nor a luxuriant metaphysical vegetation as the Indian mind — "but a park where nature retains its rights so far as compatible with man's convenience, a place that is neither natural nor artificial, but a compromise between the two claims — in fact just like an English park." ("England the Unknown Isle.") That may be exactly the case in England, but in India, under the tropical conditions, a good deal of rank vegetation has grown up, and may be seen existing

near the boundaries, though the centre of some of the gardens may be well and attractively laid out. "An Englishman is perhaps the only person in the world who can see the funny side of things without their falling in his estimation," observes the same writer. If Indians had the misfortune to fall in the estimation of the English and of the Americans, evidently it must be because there is *no funny side* in India, or is it that they have not seen it yet, their vision being blurred by a constant glance on the *serious* side of things?

Cecil Rhodes declared in his will, "I contend that the British race is the finest which history has produced." He showed that admirably in the history of South Africa. Lack of space prevents me from explaining how this was demonstrated in the case of countries like South Africa. Well may one send up a prayer to the Deity responsible for sending into the world such exquisite specimens, *not to send any more incarnations of the type of Mr. Rhodes, along with other inferior varieties also endowed with the same human emotions, at the same time!* W. E. Henley calls England "chosen daughter of the Lord, spouse-in-chief of the ancient sword." The latter connection seems to be true as can be seen from the history of India and other incidents; but the "chosen daughter" of which "Lord"? "Our social gradations are so numerous and so delicate that while most of the people ape the manners of the class just above them, there are few so poor as to be deprived of the luxury of so looking down upon a fellow being," said Professor Fisher while analysing English character. (Karl Silex: "John Bull at Home," p. 283.) But out in India it is not so much a "luxury" as an Imperial and an

imperious "*necessity*." One would like to meet a few English people who do not indulge in it in some form or other!

"If we ask what the two foundations of England are, the answer is, first, a good climate, a central geographical position; and, second, a *national character*, active rather than contemplative, moderate in its passions, genial, fond of amusement, singularly free from envy or rancour and the sentiment of revenge, respectful of social differences, adventurous, sensitive to the code of public duty, and with that underlying seriousness without which no great achievement is possible." It is a very great pity, however, that some of these splendid national virtues do not find scope for development and manifestation in India. It would be a delicate matter to describe the qualities which actually blossom out in India. The people of the land know them so well that it is unnecessary to enlarge on them.

The English character may be the *finest* in the world as it has been mentioned from time to time by English writers and speakers. No one is going to dispute it; and no body can prove it. If there were to be a competition organised on the lines of the "beauty competitions," to judge the beauties of the *character* of the different nationalities, the British entrant might easily carry off the prize — of course it depends partly on the nature of the judges also! But that is no reason at all why the English variety also may be best for "*India*" and for other countries. British character may be superfine. But when it tries to *look down* upon others because of its inherent superiority, then the trouble comes; although it has been said by great thinkers and philosophers and religious leaders that *humility is the true test of a noble character*!

But these exceptionally grand qualities of English character change a good deal while imported into the Indian environment. It may be perhaps asked by some readers: "*Where is the need to bring in and discuss here the merits of British character?*" The answer is simple. It has been regarded as the ideal for India, and India is asked to accept, to submit uncomplainingly to, the association with these splendid types, since she is not likely to come across a better specimen. This belief in the *superiority of the British character* has not been without its profound influence on the *racial outlook*. *It has a positive and a negative reaction*. From the *positive* side, the Indians are asked to admire this type presented for them as the model. Naturally the British character as reflected individually and collectively, being the finest in the world, its possessors think that there is nothing in the Indian character to admire. This was the *negative* side of the reaction. The people of India had only to try and cultivate this superior seed of English character in their domestic gardens. But this implicit faith in the unequalled superiority of English character is the counterpart of the belief in the excellence of her economic standards, of her intellectual standards and attainments. Now, no one denies the superiority of British character. It would be sheer presumption to do so, particularly because one had no chance for understanding it in its native setting, or for comparing it with the character of other nationalities, except from the impressions obtained by a perusal of books. It is quite possible that the conclusions drawn from such a source are partly mistaken, because writers have a tendency to exalt their national character at the expense of that of others. Taking

for granted that British character is all what has been claimed for it by English writers, there is another powerful consideration which fundamentally alters the nature of the question when it comes to Indian conditions. Not only is this superior quality a good deal spoiled in the course of transit, but the Indian conditions, "*physical*" and "*political*" are not calculated to improve the virtues of the stock. From the *physical* point of view, its changes have been partly discussed under the influence of climatic and physical conditions, and it is unnecessary to cover the same ground again. In the hot climate, some of the splendid virtues could not be kept up properly. They quickly disappeared by a subtle process of evaporation in many ways. But it is from the *political* side that the British character has been greatly altered by contact with the Indian environment. One can hardly exaggerate the tragedy from this side. The process cannot be better described than in the words of the German philosopher, Nietzsche. "*Ruling class morality is however particularly strange and disagreeable to the prevailing taste of the day,*" said this German philosopher, "*by reason of the sternness of the principle that one has duties only to one's equals, and that one may act towards beings of a lower order and towards everything foreign, just as seems good to one . . . . . and in any case one must resist all sentimental weakness.*" The English people have so far successfully resisted—even if they had a weakness like that—"all sentimental *racial* weakness." "Life in its essence is appropriation, injury, the over-powering of whatever is foreign to us, and weaker than ourselves, suppression, hardness, and forcing upon others of our own forms, the incorporation of others, and the least and mildest,



their exploitation." To what extent some of the English people have imbibed this philosophy of the ruling classes which the German philosopher has so bluntly stated, cannot be determined definitely. But the corporate conduct of the English residents has betrayed a strong tendency to imitate that. After all, that is the philosophy of all conquering nations and of all conquests.

What Mr. Bradley, the great scholar and critic, remarked about the German menace of England before the war, may be applied to the Indian conditions. "Any Englishman who has revered and loves that soul of her which speaks in her music, philosophy, and poetry, must desire her total defeat, for her own sake, as well as for his country's sake, and the world's." From the higher plane—without any bitterness—cannot the same sentiments be expressed in the case of the English in India? Because a final and a satisfactory emancipation of India would involve a similar process of *purification and elevation for England*. When the narrow and selfish imperialism,—however cleverly people may try to hide its ugliness from their own view and from those of others, it is impossible to deny its brutality and injustice when judged by the higher standards, which are at a discount in the European *Christian* lands just at present,—is divested of its unnatural and irritating responsibility for India, England may be able to rise to higher levels of real greatness, instead of the shadow and the simulacrum of imperial greatness which seems to dazzle the minds of greater "breeds" within the law! "Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest; and not on metaphysical speculations," says Burke very correctly. It is true in the history of

governments and in the relations between different countries and governments. If the politicians in England claim that they are an exception, and that they hold India for India's *good* rather than for her "goods" then they must think all the people of India simpletons for believing in that funny theory. But if the English politicians admit that it is for their benefit also, then *where is the basis for the superiority*, for the tone of moral exaltation, which some of them very commonly and devoutly and provokingly assume?

Even Carlyle alludes to the importance of India to English prosperity. "Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give your Indian Empire or your Shakespeare, you English never had any Indian Empire, or never had any Shakespeare? Really it were a grave question. Official persons will answer in an official language: but we, for our part too, should we not be forced to answer: Indian Empire or no Indian Empire; we cannot go without Shakespeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate some day: but this Shakespeare does not go, he lasts for ever with us; we cannot give up our Shakespeare." ("The Hero as Poet," p. 108.) It would be interesting to hear what the modern Conservatives, and the Editor of the "Daily Mail" will have to say on the matter. From some of their utterances it would appear that not a few among them are quite prepared to throw over-board not only Shakespeare and Milton, but the whole lot of literary giants if only they could retain India! It is also interesting to see H. G. Wells expressing the same sentiment for other reasons. "I should be glad to see the English speaking communities throughout the world free to re-combine, in some more progressive union, *unencumbered by any special responsibility*

for India — most alien of lands, — freed from our formally snobbish traditions.” (“Imperialism and the Open Conspiracy.”) H. G. Wells is often regarded as a visionary, and the English people are likely to attach more importance to the words of Lord Milner who once remarked:—“The Commonwealth stands for English fraternity.” Owing to the cultural and other differences, India as a dominion of the British Empire must remain “an embarrassment and weakness, not satisfying India and not contributing to the solidarity of other members.” (Lord Milner.) An excellent analysis — though evidently there are not many to agree with Lord Milner. To the other Conservative politicians like the late Lord Birkenhead, India is the real life-blood of the Empire, and the heart of the Empire would refuse to beat if India also suffered the fate of America. How can the brightest jewel in the English crown be missed without marring the beauty of the whole splendid ornament?

Whenever the Indian question — political, economic, or military — comes up, some of the Conservative newspapers and some of the politicians work themselves into a fury with as much decency as an Indian dervish does before he goes into a trance. Writing on 16th May, 1930, in the “Daily Mail,” Lord Rothmere remarked:—“The promise of Dominion Status” — a promise which seems to have placed some in a rather tight corner, in spite of their Gladstonian knack to explain away awkward commitments and unpleasant situations — a promise over which there is a good deal of discussion as to whether it was a “promise” or not — reminding one of the question “was I sober when I swore?” — “should not be confirmed, but cancelled,” which is a more decent way of doing it than shelving

it by the back-door. "It makes two to make a bargain. We are released from ours by the proclamation of the Indian nationalists to secede at the first opportunity," — by the proclamation of those very people who were according to this English lord nothing more than a "*few foolish native babblers.*" This is a good illustration of the close and provocative inter-relation between the *political and racial aspects of the Indian question*. It is mainly from the constant and sublime consciousness of superiority, as sublime as that of a Roman patrician, of a Spanish grandee, or a Prussian militarist, or a French aristocrat before the days of the French Revolution, who regarded the other classes as rotten "canille," that the clamorous coterie of Conservative co-efficients indulges in such statements.

On the Indian question some of the supercilious Lords and Commons can hardly keep up their habitual equanimity, their phlegmatic temper. "Native babblers" indeed! When history comes to be written by future impartial historians, it will be found that some of these "native babblers" and "half-naked fakirs" will occupy a prominent and permanent niche in the Temple of Fame, while most of these superior lords would be consigned to the well-deserved limbo of forgetfulness. When neither "storied urn, nor animated bust," back to its aristocratic mansion could recall the fleeting breath, some of these "half-naked fakirs" will live enshrined in the memory of a grateful posterity. When some curious "dry-as-dust" heraldic enthusiasts may rake up the name of some of these superior people on payment of a good sum of money by their descendants, posterity shall enthusiastically cherish the fond memory of some of these "native babblers." Some of these people will

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be remembered chiefly because of their indirect connections with these "native babblers," as the name of Pilate is remembered for his associations with Jesus Christ. It is unnecessary to discuss further this aspect. The attitude of racial superiority here is closely connected with the outlook in England.

The outstanding feature is the continuous decline in the United Kingdom's share in the import trade," said "The Daily Mail," on 12th December, 1933, reviewing the financial and political situation. This from a "portion of the British Empire on which Great Britain for nearly 200 years has lavished *blood and money*, India." Now this is typical of the attitude of the politicians in England, and most probably, of the large majority of the people also. I am not reproducing here all the other threats, comminations, and other journalistic exhibitions of the expert firm of Rothmere & Co. The superior editor of this and other papers forget, or evidently does not set any store by, the amount of "*blood and money*" lavished by the people of India in their efforts to defend their native land against the encroachment of their enemies — patriotism is often a virtue with the Europeans and others, and a vice and crime with the people of India! — nor of the "sepoy" blood of the "kindly dark faces" which had been lavished freely on the battle-fields of India! English imperial blood is apparently more rich in haemoglobin than that of the Indian! Granting for the sake of argument that the blood of *one* Englishman is equal in its value and properties to the blood of *half a dozen* Indians, even then the account will be only in favour of the Indian! In the films like "Clive of India" and "The Lives of a Bengal Lancer" this attitude is quite pronounced. This editor and others

forget how the country's commercial blood used to be transfused to that of English commerce and industry at Lancashire from the beginning. As Lord Salisbury said, "India must be bled," and they have been applying the lancet for a long time in the past. Nor do the Conservatives seem much worried over the unemployment, if not the starvation, of the millions of men in India. To them the unemployment of the thousands of Englishmen brought on by the present decline of the Indian market is more important, is the only consideration. The people of India may starve or die. It is already a "sub-human" life with them, and there is no use in prolonging the misery further. But the Englishman is not meant for starving. He can't afford to do it. Such seems to be the view of the English classes who look only on one side of the picture, as Nelson applied the telescope to his blind eye. The Indians in anger apply it to the other eye, and then the Englishman is furious. It is this attitude of righteous indignation by looking only one side of the picture from the English side, at the base *ingratitude* of the people of India; and the conduct of some of the Indian politicians in applying it to the other eye and seeing only the *evils* of English occupation, partly as a protest against the other line of conduct, that would appear to be the most dangerous thing to the interests of the British Empire. According to this view, the interests of the people of India, "the sons of soil," are to be always secondary to those of the people of England; to the "adopted sons." Naturally there is a good deal of irritation on both sides. From this attitude of "The Daily Mail" and others it would appear as if only the Anglo-Saxons had the right to live in this God's world! Since God created the world

for the primary benefit of the "white" man, the other black and "backward" races like the Indians have to subordinate their interests to those of the English and others! Otherwise there is no meaning in the air of superiority adopted by this English paper and by others. *But this provocative attitude is the most dangerous at the present time.* While some of the "Swarajists" may be causing some slight injuries to the imperial edifice, many of the Conservatives are busy undermining the very foundations! The Swarajists may be nibbling at the leaves and branches, but the Jingoistic politicians are pulling up the roots, though they may be horrified at the mention of such an unpatriotic crime! The hearts of some of them seem to be hardened as the heart of Pharaoh. If India is to be kept primarily for the benefit of the people of England, then it may be remarked that the Creator had no business in tolerating the existence of the three hundred and fifty millions in India, whose interests are nothing before those of the forty millions of Englishmen! The English government had no justification to breed this "sub-human" species, as the editor of "The New Statesman" says. The same sentiment was echoed by one of the eminent International Public Health Authorities — whether he is an Englishman is not stated. "It is a question of adaptation and of the evolution of a *sub-grade of the existence* on which they (Hindus) now survive. *The British are to blame for the world threat which they now constitute as a breeding ground for disease.*" ("Mother India.") It is a great pity that some of the English should not have completed the work of God's creation by destroying the incompetent and useless encumbrance of God's world meant for the "Whites!"

But if all the people of the world have been cast in the same mould of humanity, where is the meaning, where is the justice, the Christian temper and feeling, in demanding that India and other "backward" countries should only continue to cater to the wants of the English people and of other 'white' races"? After all cannot the two sections — the Englishman and the Indians — can they not continue *to live in peace and happiness in God's fair world*, without the one trying to impose his racial yoke on the other, both contributing to the good of the other? Is it not because of the attitude of one party that the whole world exists, as if it were, to minister to their needs, that the trouble arises? Did God create the world for the benefit of the English, of the white Christian races? If God would destroy the people of India, as the Angel of the Lord is said to have slain the first-born of the Egyptians, for the sake of his "chosen race" of the past, then there will not be any trouble for the people of England and of other glorious countries like America! Some of them ought to pray to the Lord for such an event, which would end the present problem quite satisfactorily for them.

It may be objected that the above words are rather cynical and sarcastic. But then the attitude of some of the English people is *revolting and inhuman*. If the Indian has the same right to life, to liberty, which the Englishman claims as his birthright, where is the basis, the justification, the morality, of all these and other utterances which continue to appear in a regular torrent from the English papers? It is said that "righteousness exalteth a nation." Is this the righteousness to which the English people are used to? Is this the result of their Christian traditions of centuries? Is



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this the manifestation of their feeling of justice and fair play? If these are the governing ideals of the English nation, if these are the fountain springs from where their imperialism receives its inspiration, then glory has certainly departed from the hands of England. Its people are vainly and frantically trying to grasp the shadow. One is inclined to echo the words of Christ when he wept over Jerusalem. If only the Conservatives knew, at least in this their day, "the things which belong unto their peace" the fate of the Empire would be something different. But it seems to have been hidden from their eyes. Their hearts appear to be hardened, their eyes blinded at the present time. Should India also witness the horrors and the tragedies that have trailed the path of imperial nations in the past, even of British Imperialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? Is there no other way towards the settlement of the present racial problem? *But as long as the present attitude of arrogance and contempt continues towards the people of the country, there is very little chance or hope of a happy adjustment of the relations.*

"The merely material consequences that would follow to every household in the country by allowing India to slip out of our keeping should be well appreciated. . . . Considering the array of vested interests involved, the capital sunk, the numbers dependent on its returns, the importance of Indian products to British industry, the numbers of British employed in the country, either officially or commercially, the army of persons on this side, — the merchants, shippers, distributors, producers, and consumers, whose prosperity and convenience are more or less bound up with the Indian commerce, is it not plain that the effect

upon them and by consequence upon the whole people of this country, of any rupture of the tie would amount to a *social disaster of the first magnitude.*" (Sir G. Chesney: "India under Experiment.") While it is encouraging to find a few writers who remove the mask of hypocritical pretences in which the Indian question is generally hidden, it may be asked in all humility, whether the *interests of the people of the land are to count for nothing?* These and similar writers are just obsessed with the fate of the people of England whenever there is any change in existing conditions. But what about the interests of the people of the land?

One cannot express too strongly the sense of injustice and dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs in the racial sphere. The words of St. Paul occur to me at this stage. Preaching before King Agrippa he said, that not only the king but all that heard him should become like him in all things except in his bonds. That not only the fair-minded amidst the English, but even the "Die-Hards" should realise the rotten character of the present *racial* and other relations, that they must know how unjust, unchristian, and ungentlemanly and irritating they are, is *the one hope, the one fervent wish and prayer*, the one consuming anxiety, of the writer.

There is one thing which may be clearly stated. It is not against the *individual opinion* or conduct of the Conservative members of Parliament that one has protested. These complaints are only against the *corporate outlook, the organised policy*, of the party. As individuals, I suppose, all of them are honourable gentlemen. But when it comes to the question of party interests, the behaviour seems to be different. It may be perhaps remarked, and I have anticipated

that objection to a certain extent, that although *ostensibly dealing with the problem of racial relations between the Indian and the Englishman*, it has gradually degenerated into an attack on the policy of the politicians in England. But this is only a superficial view. For, the racial attitude which the English people adopt in India is but the faithful, though exaggerated, counterpart of the outlook in England. Just as the fashions in the dress of the Englishmen and women in India are influenced by the modes in West End or Paris, so also the style of intellectual dress, the colour of the racial tints, the nature of the racial outlook, these are all directly and intimately connected with the developments in England. Thus the tone of racial superiority assumed by the Englishman in India is but the faithful counterpart of the political and racial philosophy of the governing classes in England. The exalted individual who called Mahatma Gandhi a "half-naked fakir," — in India fakirs generally are "half-naked," and I don't know how it is in other countries — and it would do some good to become like the "half-naked" fakir *in mind and in spirit* for some of these "full-dressed" English gentlemen; and the eminently popular and influential newspaper which honoured the "Swarajists" with the very courteous term of "native babblers" — though some of these papers evidently do not know what *they* are "babbling" about, and the super-human editor of "The New Statesman" who, reviewing the book of Miss Mayo, on 16th July, 1927, spoke of Indians as "sub-human" creatures; and the English lady, who, as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century commiserated the hard lot of the poor "natives" who lived on "rice and curry"; and the gallant Captain Ellam who called the

Swarajist politicians "liars" — it is very refreshing to taste from the pure honey of journalistic truth as it flows from some of the British papers!—and the "legal" correspondent of the "Madras Mail" — a good English daily managed by an English firm in South India — who wrote that "there must always be a considerable number among them (Indians) who are, and *always will be inferior to the English*, in the same way that there will be some English who are inferior to the Indians; and the Rt. Hon. Cadogan who wrote in his amusing book "The India We Saw" that there may be just a handful of Indians out of the 350 millions fit to be selected as officers in the Indian army, — all these belong to one superior spiritual and ethnic communion, *enjoying one glorious Anglo-Saxon racial heritage*. Similarly, the English "gentleman" of Madras who refused the use of the European bath-rooms to a lady because she was an Indian, and the English Bishop in South India who drew up a nice and casuistical distinction between the crime of an Indian and of an European guilty of the same offence; and the respectable English gentleman, who travelling in a first class compartment with a second class ticket objected to the presence of an Indian Judge who travelled with a first class ticket; and the English planter who asked an Indian planter richer than himself and as respectable as his own exalted self, to remove the sandals in his "divine" presence; and the righteous English judge who let off an English offender for a serious offence with a trivial fine; and the domiciled English residents at Bangalore who refused permission to bury one of the Indian members of the congregation in their cemetery, and the "Christian" English missionary who commented on the murder of an Indian

by an English "padre" as an "error of judgment"; and the English lady at Calcutta who called an Oxford Honours graduate and a scion of a rich and aristocratic zemindari family in Bengal, a "lousie nigger," — all these luminous racial entities are closely connected, all being firmly united in their glowing imperial creed, bound together in their splendid ethnic heritage, sharing in the same exquisite communal attitude, drinking of the same racial ambrosia, enjoying the same glorious cultural possessions, participating in similar economic activities, holding identical political opinions, belonging to the same racial freemasonry, betraying the same temper to the people of the land, "one in hope and doctrine and one in charity," as the hymn goes — one in imperial hope, one in economic doctrine, and one in racial charity! All these different classes and individuals have been tasting from the same intoxicating springs of racial superiority. "The sea is between us" said Burke, referring to the distance that separated England and India. But though divided by this powerful element, the people in England and those in India have racial "hearts that beat as one."

There were a few *social and administrative developments* at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries which modified the racial situation considerably. One such was the *speeding up of the means of communication* between the two countries. Just as the opening of the Suez Canal during the second half of the last century profoundly modified the situation, so also the progress of aerial communication is sure to have its connections with the problem, although it is a bit early to say exactly in what all ways it is likely to affect the question. That improvements in the means of communication have prejudi-

cially influenced the question may be gathered from the very apt observations of a certain English gentleman who was coming out to India. He remarked to a friend of mine on the way that "it was the Suez Canal that did the mischief." There is a good deal of truth in that statement. If the opening of the Suez Canal had the profound result of influencing the course of racial relations during the last century, the remarkable developments in aerial navigation are bound to have far-reaching consequences. The possibilities of getting away as quickly as possible and spending a larger part of the time in England are likely to have a prejudicial effect on the problem. The need to cultivate the friendship of the people would be correspondingly diminished.

There were other recent developments on the *administrative side* which were not without their reaction on the question. "*Competitive examinations supplied a new set of men drawn from a new social stratum, few of whom began with any interest in, or connection with, India, the majority of whom went up for the examination because Indian service offered good pay, a respectable status, and a desirable pension,*" observes Mr. Macdonald very aptly in his book, "The Awakening of India," p. 147. It may be safely said that the conditions of which he wrote two decades before have not materially changed. While competitive examinations ensured perhaps a more competent class of officers, the system broke the old ties of family associations to a certain extent. The personal element began to recede to the background more and more. The resulting separation was aggravated by the fact that in a good many cases these officers also brought their *women folks* with them. The people of India have no

grudge against these men enjoying a happy home life in India. But the feminine element has often come in between the people of the land and the administrators, disturbing the happy relations. One is not assigning the blame to any party just now, but simply stating one of the unfortunate facts of social and racial relations. This is a very unhappy, if not tragic, aspect of the story of racial relations. The situation at the beginning of the twentieth century created by the appearance of women in larger numbers was only another aspect of the same phenomenon which was present in the social life during the beginning of the nineteenth century when women began to come in for the *first time*. The results are mentioned by Mr. Macdonald in the following words: "They then brought out their women folk. Hill stations had to be invented, and the other distracting problems of separated families arose. The *white woman* in India enormously complicated the difficulties of government. She became responsible for the extravagant follies of Indian life, and she embittered racial antagonism by her narrow-minded prejudices and her ignorance." ("The Awakening of India," p. 147.) It is impossible to put the situation in more effective terms. One used to feel often that it was a very tragic fact of social history that *women* should have finally contributed towards the racial bitterness in such a powerful and decisive manner. Their influence on the general outlook of the different members of the family must have been disastrous. Instead of drawing closer the bonds of understanding between the two parties, women's influence in this direction had been quite depressing. It is rather doubtful if succeeding decades would ever completely repair the mischief that has been caused by

this factor. It is certainly a sad chapter in imperial history.

The picture was completed by the growth of the *spirit of imperialism* in recent years. "In later days the Imperialist spirit came to heighten the little pinnacle upon which so many officials lived, *to increase their superior offensiveness, and to repel to a greater distance the self-respecting Indian.*" ("The Awakening of India," p. 147.) Nor is it possible to deal exhaustively with the part played by the "*Hill Stations*" in this racial drama. While from one point of view it served to improve the conditions of social life for the English residents, from another side it promoted the rift between the two parties. The "*Hill Stations*" were small English colonies which encouraged the attitude of superiority, of aloofness, and of arrogance. It is interesting to follow the way in which purely *physical forces and factors* like the opening of the Suez Canal, the resort to Hill Stations in India, and other matters agitated the course of the history of *racial* relations. All these beneficial social changes ended from the racial point of view almost disastrously.

But it is doubtful if there is any more bitter foe in the path of friendly relations than the feeling, the nightmare, of "Prestige." One cannot do better than quote the words of Mr. Macdonald in this connection, though it is quite possible to give a good description of the manifestation of this attitude even otherwise. But then it will not be so authoritative. "Moreover, he feels that *prestige* is the bulwark of his rule. We do not rule India by the sword, but by our prestige," says Mr. Macdonald, though it is open to doubt how far it is applicable to the existing conditions. "The sahib is a man of power," so says the Indian; and,



adds the sahib himself, "Akbar, and not Whitehall official, is the potentate upon whom I should model myself." "Thus it happens that when a Member of the House of Commons puts questions about the sahib, the sahib resents it. He constructs theories about the questioning Member; the Anglo-Indian Press assists his imagination. So the sahib becomes more dignified, more introspective, more conscious of his own virtue, more resentful of questions in Parliament, *less careful of his manners,*" and one may also add, less anxious to cultivate the friendship of the people of the land. "He murmurs more devoutly about "prestige," that occult abracadabra which surrounds him with magical influences and which makes him sacred. He thus tends to become a thing apart, to become a Rajah who is convinced that his ancestor was a moon or a sun or other respectable deity. As a matter of simple and sober fact, he is only a good average Englishman, with remarkably little knowledge of the world and of what is going on in it, with an honest, bluff sense of justice and a real desire to do his work well. He was put in an isolated post in India at too early an age perhaps; he had to pass examinations which really did not winnow the chaff from the wheat; he has to do his best to keep fit in a climate which does not give him a chance; his whole life, and especially his arrangement of work, are unnatural; he lives in an alien civilisation and has *too defective an imagination* to get into vital touch with it. These are his troubles. A little more sympathy with the West from which he came would help him in his trials; but as it is, *he is in India but not of it, of the West, but not in it.* All he can do, therefore, is to constitute the most *clearly defined of all the castes of India, the ruling caste, and*

*become a god sitting on an Olympus."* ("The Awakening of India," pp. 27 and 28.)

Here one comes across a very good analysis of the mental outlook and environment of Anglo-Indian officialdom. "As such you see him in Simla," — not only in Simla but in all the other parts of the land wherever he can be found — "walking or riding with dignified helmet on his head and impressive cane on his hand, grave, upright, *supermanly* in aspect and demeanour. A stranger from Mars dropped on the top of this hill would certainly inquire, "Who are the Kings? From what other world do they come?" (Idem, p. 28.) The answer given by the English and by the Indian would resemble in certain matters and differ in others. While the arrangement works out excellently as far as their sense of "prestige" and official or private sense of self-importance are concerned, one is inclined to feel that the days of the "nabobs" are over, and that under the present conditions their manners and behaviour will only create amusement, and at times resentment. The present day movements, racial and political, are hardly calculated to enhance their prestige. Unless they are able to adapt themselves to the swiftly changing conditions they will continue to cut a very poor figure. The educated classes in India have witnessed enough of the racial mummery. It may be objected that the conditions of which I have spoken have disappeared and that one does not come across in modern days *instances* of any such rudeness, of such pride and contempt on the part of the Englishmen in India in public places. But while such *occurrences* are few and far between, the *spirit and outlook do not appear to have really changed*. Unless the roots of the disease are also removed there is the danger

that local symptoms may again disturb the system.

The attitude of English politicians is more or less vividly and faithfully mentioned by Froude in his writings. It is interesting to hear what Froude wrote in 1890 on the Indian question. "Our India was won by the sword. It must be held by the sword." Here we have the honest and blunt confession of an imperialist who does not care to conceal the realities of the situation in a maze of specious catch-phrases. "You English imagine that liberty means the same thing in all parts of the world, and that all mankind equally desire it. You cannot make a greater mistake." How this superior learned professor was able to gauge the feelings of the other "inferior" races of humanity from his small, but elevated Anglo-Saxon microcosm, it would be interesting to know. It is also interesting to compare this with the view of Burke — not so popular as of this professor — that all the virtues and qualities all the world over had the same significance and connotation. "Liberty with you means that you have a right to govern yourself," continues Mr. Froude, with a *new* explanation of liberty — "and that it is tyranny to govern you. *Liberty with an Asiatic means that he has a right to be governed.*" (Froude: "Short Studies.") According to this authoritative interpretation which has been immensely popular in the governing circles, liberty for an English man would mean that he has the right to do as he likes! Liberty to the Indians and other Asiatics would mean that they have the enjoyable, the coveted right, to be ruled and some times to be kicked by the Europeans! "If the people of India were your equals, you would never be there." Quite a clear and a conclusive test. It would be interesting to see if there was

equality in arms, how long Asia would tolerate brazen-faced impudence like this! "Your mission is to govern them, and you must govern them or they will cut your throats." (Short Studies," p. 499.) But it is very doubtful, if even the most benevolent form of bureaucratic government would be acceptable to a people who are agitating for self-government. It is also interesting to hear the learned historian's interpretation of the Indian demand for self-government with which some of the modern Conservatives also might agree. "The real meaning of the *cant of self-government* is that our administrators are partly conscious of their inability to rule, and partly weary of the effort." ("Short Studies," p. 500.) But can the Conservative Titans be ever weary? Some of them would be prepared and willing to bear up the imperial burden, like Atlas, till eternity.

The brutally frank confession of the late Lord Birkenhead, one of the most able leaders among the Conservatives, who as plain Mr. F. E. Smith, was said to be "invariably vulgar," as a great English journalist once described him, is highly significant in this connection, and throws interesting side-light on the "cant" of India's unfitness for self-government. "India is our prize possession. We have to live *on* it." The Indians may live *in* it. "Our own resources can keep us living for only six months of the year, and it is the task of you, the younger and rising generation,"—the people of the older generation like him having acquitted themselves well in the task—"to hold India to the last drop of your blood." Such were the words of exhortation given by the noble Lord shortly before his death to the under-graduates of Oxford once! Yet the Conservatives in England are afraid of the fate of the people

of India! "If India was lost the Empire would go," said Lord Lloyd some time back. In the light of such a "plain, unvarnished tale," the consuming care, the vicarious anxiety and suffering of the "Die-Hards," of Lord Wolmer and many other lords, for the safety of the helpless Indian peasant lamb is amusing. In the light of this and similar statements occasionally blurted out by the English, the undying vigilance for the safety of the "dumb, down-trodden millions of India," — the number is more than the English imagine when the *English caste system* is also taken into account, — who have found some sturdy champions among the ranks of the English ruling classes, is just remarkable. Similarly, the awful nightmare of a hopeless relapse to "primitive barbarism" at the slightest weakening of British influence "through all the warring worlds of Hindustan," as Browning puts it, which the frightened imagination of people like Captain Ellam conjured up in his spicy book "Swaraj," is extremely diverting. There he also speaks of the tyranny of the "brown Brahmins." That tyranny exists no doubt. But he is completely ignorant or oblivious of its strong English counterpart. "I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for the Lancashire cotton goods in part." (Sir G. Chesney: "India under Experiment.") India may be under an *experiment*. But England is also on her *trial*. It would be interesting to see how she is going to vindicate herself in this racial and other matters. Mr. W. S. Blunt, a staunch Conservative, who came to India to study Indian conditions during the days of Lord Lytton, and who was taken charge of by the Viceroy, was very much disillusioned at the close of his study and stay. He had as much facilities as Miss

Mayo had, though the *motives* and impulses were different; and consequently, the conclusions he arrived at were also somewhat different. He said:—"I have been studying the mysteries of Indian finance, under the best masters, government secretaries, commissioners and the rest, and have come to the conclusion that, *if we go on developing the country at the present rate, the inhabitants will sooner or later have cannibalism, for there will be nothing but each other left to eat.*" "There is not a myth on the earth more baseless and cruel than the claim put forth to the world that the English is ruling great, distant, India well . . . . ." said Dr. Sunderland once. "British India is only efficacious on behalf of British interests," said Dr. V. H. Rutherford. ("Modern India: Its Problems and Their Solution.")

That *colour prejudice* is rampant at the very heart of the British Empire was brought home vividly and painfully at the treatment of the Colonial athletes who had come to take part in Empire Games, when they were refused admission at some of the London Hotels. This pathetic incident drew out a protest at least from one of the London journalists, H. Swaffer, who, ridiculing the ideal of English sportsmanship, asked pertinently whether that was a concrete manifestation of the spirit that "the Empire was one and all that kind of stuff." "If there is one thing in the British Empire on which the *sun never sets, it is colour prejudice.*" Absolutely, tragically true!

The feeling of *racial humiliation* is embittered by the constant consciousness of *political and military wrongs*. It is unnecessary to reopen some of these ugly chapters in this connection. It is only if the English will recall a few of these facts

also that they can form some idea of the simmering sense of discontent and bitterness. They are likely to be deceived by the apparent calmness of the external surface. "When we stationed troops in other parts of the Empire, we did not charge them upon the Colonies, but in India we have the influence of the dead hand," says Mr. Macdonald. ("The Government of India," p. 154.) This military humiliation is but another aspect of the wider and comprehensive problem of racial injustice. "In the colonies such an act will not be permitted." In the case of India the thing is different. "If the existing system of military defence is to last, the whole cost of the British army stationed in India should be borne by the Imperial Exchequer." (Idem, p. 155.) What Mr. Gokhale said two decades ago is still true in the main outline. "England has in the past borrowed troops from India for expeditions undertaken from considerations of Imperial policy, such as the expedition to Persia and China, the Abyssinian Expedition, and others, and on all these occasions all the ordinary expenses of these troops have been taken from India, England defraying the extraordinary expenses alone. On the other hand, when India had to borrow troops from England," — the borrowing is a curious procedure — "as on the occasion of Sind Campaign of 1846, the Punjab Campaign of 1849, and the Mutiny of 1857, every farthing of the expenses of these men, ordinary and extraordinary, including even the expenditure on their recruitment, was extorted from India." (Pp. 155 and 156.) "There are ever so many other items which are chargeable to the Indian revenues which show the magnanimity of past administrations in the matter. The visit of the Secretary of State, Royal visits, these

are items on the Indian budget. When the officers who want to send money home have to suffer because of the fluctuating rate of exchanges there are exchange compensation allowances." Mr. Macdonald rightly points out that it is absolutely unfair to burden the poor Indian tax-payer with these matters, and that "these extra emoluments should be found by the British Treasury." But then it would affect the English tax-payer, who is evidently expected to keep up a certain standard of life, where as it does not matter much in the case of the ordinary Indian who is on very familiar terms with starvation and penury!

*"Our Government is extravagant, and we have behaved meanly to India,"* observed Mr. Macdonald two decades before, and it would be interesting to find out whether there has been any change in his opinions since then! "We charge the Indian tax-payer with the cost of the India Office in Whitehall — even with the cost of building it: we never think of making such a charge against our Colonies; India has to pay for Aden and for Imperial Embassies to the different parts of Asia; but the depth of the meanness was only touched when we tried — happily unsuccessfully — to charge India with £7,000, the cost of the representatives and guests from India who took part in the coronation ceremonies of the late king." ("The Awakening in India," p. 96.) But can the British Imperialists be ever mean? There is considerable truth in the words of Mr. Macdonald that "the whole problem of India will never be solved by the West brooding over and moralising upon the pin-pricks which the Eastern mind inflicts upon it." (Idem, p. 77.) "I fear that the house in which we are sheltering our hopes is built on sand." (Idem, p. 78.)



## CHAPTER XX

### *Need for Adjustment*—continued

At a time when the hoary foundations of the powerful citadel of Indian caste system have been rudely shaken by the slow but strong current of modern social and political developments here, notwithstanding the desperate efforts of a few fanatical champions of Hindu orthodoxy like the late Mr. Acharya — the Don Quixote of twentieth century Sanatanist Hinduism — and when the time-honoured supremacy of the Brahmins has been challenged by the “Depressed Classes” with the rapid removal of the curse of untouchability, there is not much chance for its comparatively young and virile English counterpart to survive. Just as its Indian prototype has been weighed in the balance and found wanting, so also the English caste system has been condemned on the same grounds, and it cannot pretend to ignore the writing on the wall, provided it has eyes to see. Entrenched though it may be behind indirect but powerful government support, the persistent plea of the English for special treatment will be more and more difficult to urge, more irksome to maintain, more mischievous to enforce, with the rapid advance of India in political and social stature. The English people coming and staying in India and working here will be forced to fit themselves into their natural, though perhaps *less dignified*, but more *secure* position among the other Indian ethnic and economic or political units in the picturesque Indian mosaic,

divested of the artificial pomp and glamour which their racial and other qualifications till now vouchsafed them. Although it may be a rather awkward task — and very few communities or classes enjoying undue privileges and power have been able to adjust themselves peacefully to the demands of a new situation which threatened to encroach on their influence, power, prerogative and position in the past, — still it has to be done if the community is to escape the risk of being standard on the sands of impotent reaction. It is high time that the majority among the English understood clearly the line of demarcation between their “*regent*” functions and their status as *ordinary citizens* of the land, instead of cultivating their old favourite regent hobby provokingly hard.

There are no more lasting “safe-guards” for their commercial and other interests than what are offered by mutual respect and tolerance. But so far there have been very few hopeful signs of these things coming from the English side in India. If they fight shy of adopting such wholesome remedies and radical cures for the long-standing racial malady — and though it is in an alarming state, the majority of the English people seem to be utterly ignorant of its existence — it will not be a matter for surprise that the English may have to repent of the consequences later. “The Moving Finger writes and having writ moves on,” and not all the cleverness or obstinacy of the English can “lure it back to cancel half a line of it,” nor all the belated tears of unavailing repentance “wash out a word of it.” “Diseases desperate grown” like the racial disease, have to be treated and cured by “desperate remedies.” The racial lichen has to be completely scraped off the otherwise wholesome Anglo-Indian

social body politic. Granting just for the sake of argument that the English residents managed to obtain *all* what they wanted — even though some of their demands are quite unreasonable, if not untenable; unless the Indians are prepared to admit them willingly, to concede them graciously, to respect them consistently and honourably, these will only adorn the pages of the statute-book. It would be highly presumptuous on the part of an inferior Indian to remind the English, with their centuries of profound political training and invaluable constitutional precedents — some of them seem to be more useful for academic reference here — that it is the *spirit* of the constitution that is going to be life-giving, and that the *letter* of the thing is useless, deadening, nay, even mischievous. Unless the clamorous and insistent claims for preferential treatment—political, commercial and racial,—are based on the *firm foundations of justice* and national righteousness, and not on the shifting sands of expediency like safe-guards, or other temporary advantages, however elaborately protected; the English in India can never hope to secure that consideration or to command that position, which is so essential for their status as a governing class in India, and for their “vested interests.”

Whether the powers of adaptation of the ordinary Englishman will be so excellent, whether his sense of self-importance inflated by racial vanity would slowly shrink to its normal dimensions without bursting, whether the racial swelling would gradually subside, and like the reed he would bend before the storm instead of remaining stiff and unbending like his tutelary Oak, and find the branches twisted and torn by the fury of the Indian racial and political cyclones,

only the future can decide. The sturdy common sense and intensely practical instincts of the majority of English people, which have often helped them out of tight corners in the past, may be expected to assert themselves in time to prevent a calamity. The racial mercury in the Anglo-Indian theodolite is often greatly disturbed in the landscape here. But with the level-headedness of the English, it is not extravagant for the people of India to expect a more accommodating spirit animating them, an attitude of reasonableness governing their conduct and outlook, greater racial charity influencing their behaviour. Of course a few intransigent racial obscurantists might continue to remain firm in their obsession of superiority, with a grim determination to fight desperately to the last ditch, "with a courage never to submit or to yield," which Milton ascribes to Satan in "Paradise Lost." How far this *causa sine quâ non* of English supremacy in India will be left in tact by the political and other developments taking place here and in other countries of Asia, it would be presumptuous to say now.

That the English people living in India will have yet a very honoured and valuable part to play in the Indian political and economic progress under the new conditions, that they will have a prominent rôle in the New Dispensation, will be admitted by all the Indians. The many contributions they can make, if they are well-meaning and fair-minded and friendly, to the reconstruction of the future of India, — and these contributions are bound to be substantial, as a result of their sound common sense in politics and business under "*normal*" conditions, and their long traditions of democratic government — will be accepted by all with

pleasure. These refreshing and fertilising springs will have to be supplied by the smooth stream of equality, and not by the turgid falls of racial arrogance, political presumption, economic excellence, and intellectual Philistinism. However long and bitter the opposition of the political "Die-hards" in England, and of racial "Die-hards" in India may be to further constitutional and other concessions, they cannot arrest the inevitable march of events, highly unpalatable as these are bound to be for them. Even if the English ruling classes in England with their "never very powerful intellect," as H. G. Wells puts it, and the English population in India, were to succeed in securing their control over the army and all other things they wanted, it is not difficult to see — if they have any *imagination* to see — that these are not calculated to protect their person, to maintain their prestige, to safe-guard their interests. These can never be safe as long as there are the smouldering embers of vindictiveness, of humiliation, and the strong desire for revenge nursed by racial pride and other forms of tyranny in the minds of the people of India. As long as Indians continue to cherish bitter memories of the racial insult, opportunities and instruments will not be wanting to show the English residents in India that they are pursuing a policy of racial short-sightedness. The Indian racial situation is rendered doubly galling by the flaming consciousness that the whole situation is unnatural, that there is very little that the *ordinary* Englishman can claim to be a superior in, except force and the colour of the skin, and that it is the uncultured and *unrefined individuals among them who have been often guilty of the worst forms of racial tyranny.*

Naturally, it is rather difficult for a class of gov-

ernors who have been brought up in the vicious traditions of racial contempt in the past, separated by almost insuperable barriers from the people of the land, even if they possessed the necessary degree of sympathy and imagination, to have any idea of the burning sense of indignation which the "subject races" feel under such circumstances. They had no occasion for any training like that in their imperialistic school. If some of these people had graduated from the School of Humanity, from the University of Racial Suffering, they might have understood the language of the people of India. But their peculiar position has only served to stifle whatever feelings of fair play and gentlemanliness they might have possessed. There is, however, no better or surer guarantee for the protection of the rights and the property of the English people in India, than the guarantee provided by good-will, by mutual toleration, understanding, and sympathy.

But the jeremiads of a Cadogan or "the lamentations of a Craddock or an O'Dwyer will unfortunately count for more than the reasonable attitude of the Europeans in India who have advised their fellow-countrymen to ignore these disgruntled pensioners on the sane ground that they are out of touch with public opinion in India . . . . It has been made amply obvious in the wild outburst from that bunch of ex-governors who occasionally emerge from their inglorious retirement in England to croak warnings in the public press at the mere thought of self-government for India so abhorrent to a powerful group which unfortunately has the ear of a section of the British public," says very pertinently Mr. Wilson. ("Indian Problems," pp. 97 and 98.) As long as English public opinion is influenced by such sources the possibilities of friendly understand-

ing are rather remote.

The feeling of resentment is often aggravated by the fact, that in a good many cases, the *only* superiority that the average Englishman could claim and show, is just the difference arising from the colour of the skin and dress. When the spirit of self-respect and national pride grows it would be interesting to see the political or economic straw that some of the anxious Englishmen would grasp. The process of immersion may be greatly facilitated by the racial encumbrance which some of them have been used to regard as their life-belt till then! With the increasing heat of the Indian political sun beating mercilessly on the racial clematis of the tree of English domination in India, it would be extremely hard for it to thrive. "Unborn to-morrow, dead yesterday, why fret about them if to-day be sweet," some of the members of the English community may be disposed to think. Such a political "carpe diem" philosophy is perfectly intelligible to the Indians, and it may even secure them some temporary advantages. Like the ostrich some of them may be disposed to take shelter in their "safe-guards." But when these come to be progressively attenuated by the powerful pressure of triumphant Indian nationalism which would inevitably sweep along with it the feeble and clumsy racial and political weapons which the English have been fashioning of late on the glowing anvil of suspicion and distrust, it will be hard for them to defend their "vested interests," their commercial "safe-guards," their racial and political creed of superiority. The political and economic embankments they have been hastily throwing up against the insidious approach of the strong current of Indian nationalism, must suffer from a prop-

cess of steady erosion which all their ingenuity can neither prevent nor defeat. In proportion as the Indians gain in political and racial stature, this racial palladium will be found weak and insecure. Already there are the smouldering embers of political discontent, the glowing sparks of economic unrest. Should these be accentuated by the *racial red-hot ashes*? The present situation is a faint reproduction of the state of affairs that existed soon after the Mutiny. "Already we begin to perceive here a recoil and reaction against the natives generally," observed Alexander Duff, describing the outlook of the English community in India at that time. Although the spirit is not so very aggressive and prominent, the modern political movements and developments have served partly to harden the hearts of certain sections and professional groups among the English in India.

That it is the terrible *disunion* of the country that has rendered possible the pride of the English people, admits of very little doubt. That some of the administrators in the past made capital out of the situation is borne out by the facts of history. "Our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the (for us the fortunate) separation which exists, between the different religions and races, not to endeavour to amalgamate them. "*Divide et Impera*" should be the principle of Indian Government," wrote Lt.-Col. John Coke, Commandant at Moradabad, in 1857. Sir John Strachey remarked, "*The existence side by side, of hostile creeds among the Indian people, is one of the strong points in our political position in India.*" But it had a tremendous influence not only on the "political position," but also on the *racial* situation. The need for a more gentlemanly treatment, for the cultivation of the good



will of the inhabitants of the land, was not considered very essential. Thus the feeling of aloofness and of superiority inevitably grew up. But it would be worth while for the English to consider how far that short-sighted policy is going to be paying at present. If there is any truth in the law of progress and development, that as a plant or an organism grows and develops it requires more room and air, then the present attitude of the English is untenable. The Indian racial plant, the Indian plant of national consciousness, is rapidly growing, and it is likely to demand more air and room. How far the hindrances placed in its way would succeed in choking it and stunting its normal growth, is a hard question to answer now. But it would do well for the English racial plant to give some space for the Indian one to thrive.

Though the highly exciting *political* and *economic* games have temporarily crowded out of the Indian arena the delicate *racial* one, it may be mentioned without serious fear of contradiction by those who have attempted to follow the currents of Indian life, who have tried to study the intricate Indian problems as closely as possible, that it is the *racial* one that is the most vital and ominous. The Indian politicians and the Englishmen here and in England are so absorbed with the economic and administrative matters, with devising the necessary "safe-guards" and with other affairs, that the racial question, just because of its diffusiveness, its universality and its absence of localisation and the ignorance in which it is enveloped, does not receive the attention it deserves. Though the racial poison is in the Anglo-Indian social system, it has not collected itself in any one place. It is nevertheless a grim spectre which stalks over the

whole land, with very mischievous possibilities.

The racial and colour problem in India is but a segment, a fairly big segment no doubt, of a vicious circle, of the huge, *world-wide racial question*. It has been in the past, and it is going to be increasingly in the future, *the acid test of Christianity in the East as well as in the West, the touchstone of the British Empire*, the criterion, at least one of the criteria, by which *western civilisation* is going to be judged, and according to the present day conditions, to be *condemned*. It is high time for the English in India to make an honest effort to escape from this racial quagmire in which some of them have been wallowing, perhaps unwittingly, in which their national honour, and their sense of justice have been badly besmirched. God grant that a quick perception of the innate injustice of the present racial situation, which appears to have escaped their politically-distracted, economically-worried, socially-absorbed and prestige-obsessed attention so long, may open their eyes, and that the thick racial darkness that now envelops the Anglo-Indian landscape may be rapidly lifted with the early dawn of good sense, racial justice, and righteousness. It would go down as one of the most grim and tragic ironies of history of the British rule in India, that the English, who are attempting to foster the delicate plant of *political democracy* here should be responsible at the same time for nursing the plant of *racial and social inequality*, of a *racial oligarchy*, of the most unattractive type. The wise and eloquent words of Lord Irwin which one had occasion to mention before may be brought in once more. "We have to discard the idea of the governors and the governed, and once Indians are convinced that the *basis of equal partnership is being*

*attained, half the difficulties would be over."* Not merely half, but more than half the trouble would disappear. But the idea of "equal partnership" will never be attained, as long as the "white partner" looks down on the brown, as long as this adventitious pigment of the skin, this superficial distinction of a cutaneous standard, forms one of the most important and irritating lines of unhappy division between the two "partners"; as long as the Indian partner, in spite of the substantial capital he has contributed — the *colour* of the share capital is not very objectionable — is compelled to adopt the apologetic tone of the Prince of Morocco before Portia:—

Mislike me not for my complexion"  
which I had occasion to quote before. The willingness of the English residents to work this partnership will be apparent only when they climb down from their old racial monopolistic heights, and cease to lecture only of the immense services they have done, presenting only the credit side of the balance, unwilling to face the items on the debit side. Some of them are likely to cut very poor figures if they played this "sotto voce" in India. If they have rendered great services to India, it is time to remind some of them, that they have received as much reward as they can expect in this world — and in a few cases, more than that. This jarring, patronising attitude is not going to ease the situation. If some of the English people knew only how to lecture to the people of India to behave like "good boys" — as some of them seem to do now and then — and the lecture itself is given in an irritating, if not insulting, tone by a few — that would be a labour wasted. It would be better if the English people *showed* how to behave properly. But if the English

men mean business, as most of them evidently do, then they would do well to get down from their superior heights of aloofness where they have been used to wandering till now, and to walk in the ordinary Indian "terra firma" where contact with the people is possible. The racial "purdah" in which some of the English have been living will prove a useless and inconvenient encumbrance. It is interesting to note in what all subtle ways Indian conditions and customs have influenced the life and conduct of the English during their stay here. They have adopted some of the convenient aspects of *Indian caste system*. They have imitated not a few of the conditions of social life also quite naturally.

The traditions of decades, the usages of a long period, would die hard. But if out of the ashes of the old vicious heritage a new plant of social sanity and racial fair-mindedness would sprout to adorn the Anglo-Indian social scenery, then the present hardships and inconveniences have been well endured, and the past mistakes partly rectified. Of course, the process of transition would not be an easy one. The writer is not guilty of indulging in any rhetorical bombast or hyperbole, when he says that on the *speedy adjustment of this situation depends the peace and happiness of India, and the future of Britain*.

It is high time for the Englishmen in India to make a friendly "racial gesture" entirely different from the usual ones they have been indulging in till now. The past history and the present attitude of the majority of the English people here do not give much room for any such sanguine hope, for any optimistic view, that the English themselves would recognise the unsatisfactory character of existing conditions; or that even

if their harassed attention were drawn towards it, they would easily and gracefully adjust their conduct. Moving in the same old, and in some cases, dear racial rut, used to tasting the fruits of power and prestige so long, brought up and imbibing the imperialistic traditions for such a period of time, it is not easy for them to adapt themselves to the needs of the present situation. But whether they wish it or not, they will have to adjust themselves to the inevitable. The friction involved in the act, however, will be minimised if it is done willingly. "Obstinacy, sir, is certainly a great vice; and in the changeful state of political affairs, it is frequently the cause of great mischief. It happens, however, very unfortunately, that almost the whole line of the great and masculine virtues — constancy, gravity, magnanimity, fortitude, fidelity, firmness — are closely allied to this disagreeable quality, of which you have so just an abhorrence; and in their *excess* all these virtues easily fall into it," said Burke. How true of Indian conditions at present! The same may be said of racial obstinacy. "God's mill grinds slow but sure."

The need for a change in the outlook and racial spirit of the English people in India is very urgent. Instead of setting their own house in order, some of them seem to be more anxious to secure certain "safe-guards" to strengthen their position. The peculiarity, and in most cases the tragedy, of all special privileges and "safe-guards" in the past have been that the people who enjoy them are seldom able to dispense with the use of such feeble devices, and are not anxious to part with them, even though the conditions under which some of these rights were granted, or in some cases arrogated, had ceased to exist, and a further enjoy-

ment may even be fraught with danger to the parties themselves. It resembles the case of a delicate hot-house plant which cannot survive when removed from its highly artificial surroundings. Amidst the chill political and economic storms which would continue to blow with unabated fury in India; amidst the "*sturm und drang*" — the storm and the stress — as the Germans would say, of Indian political life, it would be interesting to see how this tender plant would survive. Just as a protected industry is seldom able to dispense with ease its old supports, and finds it hard to face the fierce winds of competition, so also a fondled racial infant will experience great inconvenience in resisting the attacks and reprisals of a neglected and uncouth Indian piccaninny which it had been used to kick before. While the English people have remained racially stagnant, the Indian has been growing in recent years, and he considers himself quite a match with the ordinary westerner, if there are no irritating and artificial handicaps against him. How far the Anglo-Indian racial dinosaur of the nineteenth century which is rapidly becoming extinct as a species, would find the environment comfortable and pleasant with the growing political heat of the tropics, remains to be seen. It would be interesting to observe how the worn out racial strand in the cable of English superiority in India that ties their boat to its anchor in the treacherous Indian waters would stand the continued strain and pressure put on it by the Indian national storms. It is primarily a matter for the English nautical experts.

The Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo, and once the hero of the nation, who was for a short time Prime Minister before the passing of the Reform Act, used to live in constant dread of violence from the mob

because of his bitter opposition to the Reform Act. He considered the English Constitution the most perfect thing in the world, as some of the English people in India are also thinking that the changes contemplated in the new Constitution are more than she deserves, and gave his benediction in that strain a short time before the actual storm of the Reform Act burst. He had to live, however, in a house protected by iron bars, the glass ones being unable to resist the fury of the popular clamour which found expression in brick-throwing. There are many modern Wellingtons among the English in India. How far their ark of safe-guards would remain afloat when the storm of nationalism breaks out in all its fury would be interesting to see. "The one fatal thing is to sit on the safety valve, and that is what we have been doing in India," wrote recently an English journalist on the Indian situation. It is also applicable to the Indian racial situation, where there is no disposition to stir from that insecure place. Unless some of the leading English doctors are disposed to use their curette more vigorously in India, they are not likely to scrape off this racial eruption from the otherwise sound English system. The racial aureole that now surrounds the figure of the superior Englishmen in the tropics is likely to fade away more and more with the brilliance of the Indian political sun. Whether the serious complaint arising from frequent racial intoxication in the case of some among the English people in India will be amenable for treatment at the hands of their own countrymen, only the English people can decide.

To the gorgeous *racial mansion*, the "white villa" of Macaulay, to the splendid castellated Anglo-Indian edifice built out of all reach beyond the low, crowded

hovels in the Indian ghetto, which the English have raised in the tropics, with a mixture of the Gothic, Saracenic, Moghul, Dravidian, and other baroque styles, surrounded by a fine garden where all the fragrant flowers and plants thriving in the neighbourhood may be found, which has been adorned lavishly and equipped magnificently, whose tessellated pavement is laid out in white marbles, whose ground floor is occupied by the businessmen, the civilians and other classes, where the apartments in the second storey are used as retiring rooms, a new room has been added in some places, to receive a few obliging Indian guests occasionally, without serious violence to the old structure. Though imposing in appearance, the foundations of this building of English racial supremacy are somewhat unsound. Being founded on tropical slime, it is a bit doubtful if it could stand the fury of the political and economic storms that the Indian meteorological department forecasts. Whether the shocks which the seismographs anticipate, will leave the unsound foundations in tact remain to be seen. Naturally there is considerable uneasiness and anxiety among the old tenants. Though few of them seem to be anxious to vacate the place bound to them by so many dear traditions and associations, they are trying hard to pump in some more concrete into the threatening cracks and crevices. But it is doubtful if these desperate "safe-guarding" devices attempted during the eleventh hour would save the doomed structure eventually, notwithstanding the cleverness of the engineers. Like the house mentioned in the Gospels, on which "the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house, and it fell; and great was the fall thereof," so the English in India



are likely to find, that when the bitter political winds blow, and the overwhelming economic floods come, and the heavy social rains descend, *the racial mansions* which they had built with great care and patience, failed utterly to resist the devastating fury of the elements. On the Indian racial bay it would be well to take observations as to their longitude and latitude at present. Unless the English are prepared to dispense with the use of the racial crutches which have so far dwarfed the growth of their corporate personality, there is every possibility that they would lag behind in the keen political and racial race. What was till now a serious handicap to others would prove a grave handicap to them, a nemesis not altogether undeserved. Whatever dogs may bark and howl, to adapt a well-known simile, — and some of them seem to be rather noisy — whether the thoroughbred Chauvinistic hounds, or the growling Rothmerian bull-dogs, or the restless retired civil and military mastiffs, or the Anglo-Indian mongrels, or the stylish bureaucratic Newfoundlands, or the Indian princely lap-dogs, or the Zemindari poligar dogs, or the whining Indian communal “pariah” dogs, or the shaggy Sanatanist whelps, or the Indian Capitalist terrier, the English commercial Dandi-Dinmonts, the English planting Dalmatians, or the Indian ryotwari pugs; the heavy-weighted, and slow-moving Indian national caravan will march forward through the desert and reach its destination safe with the radiant glow of sunset. The English may try to scotch the snake of Indian self-respect with the racial stick, but they can never hope to kill it, and if it gets another chance to bite the venom will be all the more concentrated and dangerous.

The need for a very urgent change, and a more

reasonable frame of mind, a more friendly racial outlook, was admirably brought home to the English in one of the most convincing speeches which the Leader of the Congress party made in the Legislative Assembly recently. "Let them not trot out the protection of the millions, for indeed they might as well claim the trusteeship of the world. But may I ask my European trading brethren for whom I have the greatest respect and whose interests are perfectly safe without the provisions against discrimination which show only the state of mind in which they are; instead of charging us with suspicion and distrust, have you really so ruled this country, that you yourselves have felt, at all events in your own minds, that when India is free there will be retaliation for your wrong? *If that is what you think then you testify to your own condemnation.* If therefore, you believe that you have so ruled as you claim to have ruled, justly and well, then this claim for protection against discrimination with reference to your properties and rights and with reference to the maintenance of the continuance of your exploitation are wrong in themselves." The whole case against safe-guards, *racial*, commercial and political, has been stated there.

Is such a reprehensible social convention and usage, such a racial animus, consistent with the lofty principles of the Christian religion which the English people profess, and which some of them are also anxious to teach the people of India; reconcilable with the high traditions of justice and fair play which they regard as their great national asset; creditable to the high ideals supposed to be underlying and animating the "British Commonwealth of Nations," agreeable to the all-pervading sporting spirit and instincts said to be such an inherent

and outstanding feature of British public and private life, in harmony with the current estimate of English national character and national virtues which English politicians proclaim from the platforms, co-extensive with the principles of social equality nominally accepted as the foundations of their democratic social life, honourable to the custodians of a vast empire, commendable in the case of a country, which in the words of Shakespeare:—

"This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,

. . . . .  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea;"

worthy of a land which boasts of having given the *democratic* form of government to the world, compatible with the achievements of a nation which worked for the abolition of slavery, and descending to lower and often "*decisive*" levels, profitable and paying to a land which depends for its prosperity mainly on the patronage of foreign customers, a good proportion among them being Indians?

One is inclined to echo the words of Queen Margaret in "Henry VI."

"My Lord of Suffolk, say, is this the guise,  
Is this the fashion in the court of England?  
Is this the government of Britain's isle  
And this the royalty of Albion's king?"

Similarly the Indians may ask of the English here and in England, "Is this the racial fashion in their country? Is this the racial spirit in their land? Or as the Bast-

ard says in "King John":—

"The life, the right, and truth of all this realm  
Is fled to heaven; and England now is left  
To tug and scramble, and to part by the teeth  
The unow'd interest of proud-swelling state.

And heaven itself doth frown upon the land."

(King John, Act IV, sc. iii.)

The English people take great credit as a "sporting nation." In India, however, it is not uncommon to find this "sporting spirit" unexpectedly assuming often very curious and amusing forms. In the racial foot-ball game in the tropics, there is a good deal of hard kicking and foul play, which the referees pretend to overlook. The writer knows from experience how angry the players and the spectators become, when there is a tendency for the game to degenerate in that manner. Since I was Captain of my College Foot-ball Eleven, I know how quickly bad blood is aroused when some of the members of the rival team indulge in a foul game. In the racial cricket-game in India, one can find a good deal of "body-line" bowling now and then made use of by some of the players who consider it as an indispensable part of the tactics to win the game — even though there may be loud and repeated protests from the Indians against such bad style. Since the rules of the sport are invariably altered in India to suit local conditions, it is not possible to judge the Indian variety by the rules which govern the game in other countries. In India, however, one form of social bowling countenanced and followed is often the "body-line" variety, and the more dangerously the ball bumps against the person, and hits the head or other part of the body of the Indian bastmen, the greater

the amusement and applause from among some of the excited English audience, even though the Indian spectators might denounce such unsportsmanlike conduct!

What Colonel Nassau wrote in his letter to the "Times" on 18th October, 1871, may be applied to the existing racial conditions here. Speaking of the Mussalmans of that time he said that they are "quite prepared to accept the supremacy of the English as an evil which must be endured, because it cannot be cured." But the present day generation of Mussalmans and Hindus is hardly prepared to stop there, and to resign themselves philosophically to the inevitable. The earlier an adjustment takes place in the racial account, which has been long in arrears, the better for all parties concerned. Whether the racial obscurantists in India would be prepared and willing for a change in their attitude cannot be stated with any definiteness at present. But if the racial *dross is eliminated* and the dirt removed and the pure stuff separated, *then the English metal will be one of the finest imaginable*. It would however require a lot of filing before the real colour of the pure metal could be revealed, judged by prevailing tendencies. One is not very sanguine of the results of an appeal to the racial "Die-hards." There are some people here who remind me of the case mentioned in the Gospels that "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." But it is to the reasonable and thinking element in English society, whose selfish and class interests have not utterly blinded their vision, whose racial pride has not perverted their judgments, warped their finer sentiments, whose sense of imperial prestige does not stifle the nobler and humane instincts in them, whose

Christian principles and heritage are not overlaid by a mass of false jingoistic effluvia, that I have directed *this appeal for racial charity* in all earnestness and humility. It has been remarked that an "Englishman is sound at bottom." Well, it is to this "sound" element that I have placed the racial case of India. "He knows very little of mankind, who expects by facts of reasoning to convince a determined partyman," said Lavater. It is not to the determined racial or imperial partymen, to the Craddocks and O'Dwyers that this appeal has been directed. fact

It would be interesting to see if the racial barnacles clinging to the hull of the English vessels in the Indian waters could be scraped off without injury to the timber as well. That is evidently a matter for the nautical experts. But all the same it has a direct connection with the people of India also. "The natives are getting bumptious already," wrote Mr. Hervey, the author of "The European in India," more than a century ago. Whether this bumptiousness is the reaction against western bumping is however not stated! This "bumptiousness" is only likely to increase as days go by. What Burke wrote on the American situation may be recalled at the present stage. "Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits, and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances are what form the great securities of your commerce." ("Conciliation with America.") One might repeat the same thing to the English community — particularly the commercial community in India. It is not their elaborately planned out "safe-guards" that are going to protect their interests in India. Nor is it the police or army that is going to defend them ultimately. But fact

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it is the smouldering embers of racial unrest, of ethnic discontent, which any economic wind or political breeze may easily fan into a flame that the English people have to guard against. If the English residents in India can turn the hose of their just and humane feeling on the glowing racial sparks, they might in time prevent a conflagration. Some of the English by their insolence are simply adding fuel to the fire. In proportion as India's self-respect grows—and national self-respect flourishes like the plant camomile, which is supposed to grow in proportion as it is trodden under foot—the English will find that their present attitude will only lead to greater bitterness, • create greater friction. Racial repression like all other varieties of the same ugly brood, is doomed to failure. "Invention is exhausted; reason is fatigued; experience has given judgment; but obstinacy is not yet conquered," said Burke in his famous "Speech on American Taxation." Similarly about the racial situation it may be doubted if racial obstinacy could be conquered by these feeble arguments proceeding from a brown "inferior" Indian!

"Now, it is not good for the Christian's health  
to hustle the Aryan brown.

For the Christian riles, and the Aryan smiles,  
and he weareth the Christian down;

And the end of the fight is a tombstone white  
with the name of the late deceased

And the epitah drear: "Here lies a fool  
who tried to hustle the East."

It is rather undignified, if not unchristian, that the Englishman should be *riling* in India! Nor does it do any good to his health. But that is what some of them have been doing racially. The danger arises however

not so much from "*over-hustling*" as from their lethargic movements. It is sad to note that the results of the fight of the Christian in India is somewhat different from those of the fight of the Christian mentioned in "Pilgrim's Progress"! The slow, uneven, and comparatively smooth progress of Indian constitutional reforms is threatened not merely by the dangerous side-track of Indian communalism, by the wider cross-path of the princely and aristocratic interests, as by the *mule-track of English racialism*.

An interesting fact of history which the English politicians have known before very well, which really explains their nervousness at the present conditions, is that it has been the connection with India that had laid the foundation of the commercial prosperity and the national greatness of the different European powers from time to time. Ever since the days of the Egyptians and the Assyrians and Babylonians who carried on trade with India, and of the glorious days of Tyre and Sidon, of Alexandria and Venice, "which held the gorgeous East in fee" as Byron puts it, of Portugal and of Holland and France, and lastly of England, it has been the fertilising, *enriching connections with India*, and in some cases with the other Eastern lands also, that have mainly *contributed to the greatness of those states*. It is also shown in the history of some of the families in England. The Pitts rose to prominence because of the diamond obtained from India. Clive managed to take with him thousands of pounds from here. The flow of money has been going on from the seventeenth century, and it has not yet stopped, according to the latest figures of gold exports from Bombay. Yet the English people are more anxious about the safety of India, than about



the prosperity of England which depends mainly on the trade with India! This self-deluding phantom has been in no small measure responsible for the unfortunate state of affairs here. If it is openly accepted that one party is as necessary for the welfare of the other, then the ground of superiority will at once disappear, and a good deal of the acute resentment that now exists as a result of this arrogant tone of superiority, would also disappear. Not a few of the English people come to India for their living. Yet they want the Indians to believe that they are here for the good of the Indians! They are honestly persuaded about that. According to Captain Ellam "the drain of wealth from India is a pure myth." ("Swaraj," p. 164.) Would it were a myth! It is as much a fact as the denial of this gallant captain, as his existence in the world! Of course it is not to be understood that India does not get a return for her money in other forms.

When the Englishman waxes very eloquent on the grand things that he has done, and that seems to be a popular tune now — one is inclined to ask whether the English did not get any benefit out of India, and whether they have been here just for the *good* of India? But the mask of altruistic service has been put on for such a long time that they find it difficult to dispense with it. They are not going to deceive any one but themselves. It is useless for the Englishman to presume that his presence is indispensable for the prosperity of India. *India is equally indispensable for his prosperity.* It is only if the foundations of the partnership are built on this solid ground, removed from the slush of hypocritic pretences, that the edifice is likely to stand. It would do well for some of the

English to ask, if England could maintain her present position without India. If they are honest, the answer is plain. Even if they are reluctant to admit it, they are deluding themselves if they think that the people of India are ignorant of it. India will relapse into her "state of primitive barbarism" no doubt! But what about England? He that is already down need not fear a fall. *It is England that has to be careful in the matter.* India may fall. But she knows how to live even in that fallen condition. For the overwhelming majority of the people of the land, for almost 90 per cent. of India's population, it does not matter in the least whether it is an Asiatic power or an European, a Christian or Hindu or Mohammedan, that is at the helm. The Indian peasant donkey does not care whether the rider is an Englishman or any other Asiatic. Masters may come and go for him, but he goes on for ever in his penurious, half-starving but philosophic manner. But imagine for a moment the condition of England! With the other Dominion markets shrinking, with the European and American powers competing with her in her commerce and in her armaments, with Japan raising her ugly head in the Far East, the prospect is not altogether very bright. Yet, the Conservatives are only anxious about the fate of India! Some of them, fortunately for themselves, are hardly aware of the amusement they give to the "sub-human" species in India by their self-deluding game! This aspect of the question is not without its serious reaction on the *racial problem*, and it is only in that connection that the whole thing has been brought in. According to the English Imperialists the English connection is absolutely essential for the prosperity of India. Hence the Englishman is at liberty to do as

he likes. Well, the people in India, at least a good proportion among them, are not so firmly convinced about it, and they are inclined to think that *India is more indispensable for the prosperity of England*. If there is any truth in that, then the present English attitude is ridiculous and mischievous.

"The East bowed low before the blast  
In patient deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
"And plunged in thought again,"

said Mathew Arnold. India might have plunged into a thought of her poverty perhaps, or of the beauties of her ancient culture. Anyway she could not be utterly annihilated by that and other conquests. If for a moment one were to envisage the state of affairs where India is independent of England—the mere suggestion might bring an attack of political epilepsy to some of the Conservative politicians—what would be the state of the English? With no markets in India, with no help from the army maintained in India, with no profits from the capital invested in India, what will be the condition of England? It is a great pity that the Conservatives in their consuming anxiety for the welfare of India should be blind to this aspect of the problem. Or is it because they are *too much alive to that side* that they are anxious to prevent it, as seems to be the case? Then why not have the courage of their convictions and speak it out and not try to escape behind very convenient sophistries about the *safety of India* which deceive none except the people who urge them? The people in India know too well who stands to lose in a greater measure under such circumstances, and the English will be only cutting a very poor figure if they try to drape their imperialism

under altruistic pretences. While the Conservatives are anxious of the fate of the "dumb" millions in India, they are also *dumb* about their own fate! The words of Christ addressed to the women of Jerusalem that they need not weep for him but for their own children comes to my mind in this connection.

What the writer wants to emphasise is simply this, that the interests of *both parties are quite closely bound up*. India is as much necessary for the prosperity of England, as England seems to be that of India. If that is fact, and that it is a fact no one but the most self-deluded and blindly perverse Englishman and the most misguided Indian will deny, then where is the *basis* for this feeling of superiority? How can the ordinary English businessman afford to adopt an arrogant attitude, to betray an insolent tone, towards his Indian partner, — unless he is of unsound mind, — if both are *equal partners*? The Indian partner is as much necessary for the imperial business as the English; otherwise he will have to close down the business ere long. The Englishman would do well to think over this aspect of the problem and to cease parading the repulsive, meaningless, and provocative sense of superiority on every occasion. India is already down and she has very little fear to sink further. Even if she has the misfortune to do that, she is not unused to that kind of existence. A good proportion of the people are on quite friendly terms with the bear of starvation and they are not daunted by the approach of that or even of the Russian Bear! It is only a few rich people who may be very nervous at the prospect. But what about the English? Accustomed to a life in the high imperial and racial mansions, most of them will find the transition to a plain and obscure dwelling house, and the

reduction of their grand establishments, not such an easy or pleasant thing. If so much time has been devoted to this very obvious matter, it is just because, this imperial hypocritical mask has done enough of mischief for the English people, and the earlier it is removed, the better for all parties concerned. The English people are hardly aware of the *amusement* they give to the people of India when they speak of the fate of India under such circumstances. It is not to be understood from this that India has nothing to fear from a severing of the connections with England. No, far from that. She may to have to go through some more suffering. *But Great Britain stands to lose more under the circumstances.* That is the point which I am anxious to make clear. It is only when the English people will face such facts that they can understand how jarring and unpleasant and irritating the whole sense of superiority that is now displayed, without any rhyme or reason, by a good many of the English people here, appears to the Indian. It reveals only their blindness to the realities of the situation. It is on their *solid ground of mutual interest* that the partnership can be built, not on the soft and insecure foundations of arrogance, pride, and contempt. India has been the Imperial milch cow for some time. While the other superior breeds in the farm have practically ceased to yield any form of milk — fresh or condensed — except for commercial purposes, the Indian one still continues to supply partly the needs of the English consumers. But while the milk may be delicious, the colour of the brown cow continues occasionally to give offence to the delicate eyesight of a large proportion of the milk-consuming population used to the sight of the other varieties!

The racial problem in India is not without its significance to the *British Empire and the rest of the world*. "The fact that the issue between England and India is only part of a larger issue which involves the *future course of all human effort* cannot be too strongly insisted upon," says Mr. Byron. ("An Essay on India.") The portentous, if not alarming, significance of the whole of the racial problem is mentioned there. "In the eternal contact between East and West, the West to maintain its vitality has always needed," and always needs, — though according to English and other Western writers generally the order is reversed — "the contributions of the East." "The instinct of all western effort towards good is, and always has been generally, through a rational application of science, equity, and political theory; so that in ages when these pursuits achieve successful concrete expression, that expression is elevated into a Golden Calf, an aim in itself, obscuring the higher and greater sense of reality which is the immemorial property of the East," — a property which finds little market value in the Western stock exchange which has been demanding its gold, and which is being shipped in large quantities from India to the tune of millions of pounds weekly! "In the United States," says the same English writer, there is the nascent of "a portentous barbarism, whose clamour before the Golden Calf," — before the "Almighty Dollar" — "threatens to obscure even the lesser, purely expedient virtues such as justice and integrity of materialistic civilisation, and which pays neither lip service nor courtesy to Universal Truth. From this barbarism, already infectious, paramount in Russia, and growing in Japan, the true Asia must save us.

But she must save herself, must devise a means whereby Western ideas, instead of extinguishing, may reinforce her genius." ("An Essay on India.") Coming as this does from an English writer, there is greater significance and force in the remarks. It reveals the inability of the West which is trying to force the East into her mould, to meet the demands, moral and intellectual, of the present situation. It is hardly possible to express the significance of the contact — the racial political and intellectual contact — between East and West in more striking words.

The racial variety entertainment that is offered in India to the public at present is but a small, though integral, part of the *huge colour drama* that is being staged in the different theatres of the world, by different actors in different costumes, brown, dark, white and yellow. In the happy, though difficult, solution of this pressing problem, Great Britain can play a unique and unrivalled part. If sanity and moderation, self-restraint and fore-thought, instead of pettiness and pride, selfishness and arrogance, could be brought to bear on the solution of this vexed question, there is some chance of an easier and a more satisfactory settlement of the whole hydra-headed problem. Foreign domination has not succeeded in crushing the soul, though it might have forged some physical fetters, and though it might have enfeebled the intellect and perverted the tastes of some of the Indians. But the elusive and mystic entity of the soul has retreated frightened into the interior recesses, baffling successfully whatever feeble efforts have been made by a few cultured and broad-minded English people to coax it back. The counterpart of the Englishman's convenient retreat into his *external physical cell*, is the Indian's

withdrawal into the eastern *mental and intellectual* labyrinth, to which the English have generally found no clue. Some of the arrogant warders have the habit of poking the thing in a very mischievous manner from the outside. But all attempts of interested partisans and presumptuous propagandists and critics have only served to increase the existing bitterness. All such attempts are bound to fail. They will only serve to increase the bitterness, to intensify the acerbity, and to widen the rift. Occasionally they may also serve to open the vials of unmitigated vituperation which finds an ephemeral habitation in such works as "Uncle Sham" the counterblast to Miss Mayo's "gutter-productions."

The vital connections of the racial problem with the future of the *British Empire* also, were clearly brought out in a very thought-provoking article which appeared in the "Empire Review." (February, 1934.) "Denied '*racial*' equality in the four other continents which the White's control; possessing a powerful army and with an over-flowing population, it is not surprising that Japan is resolved to be either equal in all the world or dominant in Asia." ("The White Australia Policy," C. Price Congreve.) "Australians in general subscribe to a "white policy" — the term "black policy" would have been more fit, since it is to exclude the "blacks" from their white haven. "In any case it is one of the unalterable features of national and internal policy and few would be willing to deviate by a hair's breadth from that policy. . . . Meanwhile North (Australia) remains vacant, and the Far East threatens." "Nature abhors a vacuum," and it would be interesting to see how the racial vacuum is going to fare. The last admission is also significant, as it



clearly indicates the nervousness of the white western statesmen of the ugly menace from the Asiatics which they could not conceal any longer by Imperialistic bombast. The plan for the strengthening of the naval base at Singapore is an ominous offshoot of the present situation in the Far East!

The scope of the present work does not admit of any detailed treatment of the racial problem in *other parts of the British Empire or outside*. It might be out of place to bring into the present discussion the conditions prevailing in other parts of Asia as in China, or in South Africa or Australia and America. I hope to develop that in another work "Imperialism and Racialism" for which materials are being gathered. That would involve a study of the colonial policy of the other European powers like France, Germany and Belgium. All these are more or less closely connected. For the racial problem, this contact between East and West, between the dark and brown and the white races, has a very ugly and a very tragic tale to tell. What the Gaekwar of Baroda said of the "snobbery and colour bar of Christians" during the course of the "International Congress of Religions" held at Chicago, is a mild reminder to the Christian nations of the festering sore in their social life. It was the height of irony that a Hindu prince, well known for his liberal views and cultured outlook should have found it necessary to remind the *Christian* nations of the West of their tragic failure to implement the teachings of Christianity. At that time the race of modern Miss Mayos was perhaps unborn! How desperate and hopeless the racial situation is in South Africa may be partly gathered from the book of Mr. C. F. Andrews, "What I Owe to Christ." The public knows the situa-

tion there well, and it would be somewhat irrelevant to bring it in this discussion, though it is but part of one comprehensive racial problem.

England and other countries are sending out missions to spread the knowledge of the Christian gospel. All honour to those responsible for them. But may I suggest in all humility — and it has been said by many intelligent non-Christians also — that the European lands stand in greater need — at least in as much need — of “conversion” and regeneration, and that unless there is a change of outlook and mentality among the people in the western lands, those in India have reasons to suspect that the Gospel of Christ is but the fore-runner of the message of Imperialism, that some of the missionaries but prepare the way for the other classes like the merchants to come and continue their activities. Of course, such a view is wrong and unfair, but western Christians cannot blame the people of India and of other Eastern lands, if they find the Christian message indirectly perverted to serve the ends of racialism and patriotism. The conduct of the missions must be in such cases, like Caesar’s wife, “above suspicion.”

The imperceptible change that came over England in the matter of *racial relations* after the glorious days of the Reform Act and the Abolition of Slavery during the later part of the 19th century is discussed briefly by Mr. Andrews. “But a subtle change had come in the early eightees, just about the time of the European scramble for African territories and similar acts of greed elsewhere;” — the appetite of racial imperialism, like that of its economic counterpart, grows with the meat it feeds on — “and this change had coincided with a

hardening of colour prejudice and racial arrogance all the world over, which was utterly contrary to the spirit of Christ. The "white" man had separated himself off from all the other races, as a superior race, and this had led to bitter resentment." The result of this separation was partially revealed in the late war! "Now, that I had been abroad I had realised, as my father had never have been able to do," and as most of the ministers of the Gospel of Christ in the United Kingdom, and the majority of the English people in India seem to be apparently unable to do, "*the demoralising effect of such a racial attitude,*" — to some of them it is a very patriotic attitude over which there is nothing to feel sorry for! — "*especially within the tropics, where things that bring shame may be done with a terrible and fatal impunity,*" as they are still being done in a few cases. "Indeed, I knew full well that, apart from the presence of Christ with me in daily life, I should have gone further than others in racial contempt and selfishness, for I had the seeds of these evils within me." ("What I Owe to Christ," p. 144.) If some of English people in India are guilty of this attitude of racial contempt for the Indian, then it is not difficult for the people of India to follow whether it has been brought on by the influence of Christ or not. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" asked Christ. Similarly it may be asked, "What doth it profit a nation if it gained the world — its trade and commerce; and lost its soul, its spirit, and mind?" Evidently that aspect of the teachings of Christ is not much in favour with the imperial-minded among the English.

The position of India and the treatment of Indians

abroad, particularly among the other parts of the British Dominions, have connections with, and reactions on, the racial situation in India which it is not wise to ignore. They have administrative, economic, and other implications. But it is doubtful if their ethnic, their racial and national consequences are not the most important and the most disgusting. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald touches on it in his book "The Government of India." "The Indian is proud to belong to the British Empire. . . . We pride ourselves on the peace and justice we have given to India, but they form only a barren soil for gratitude. . . . The result is that the Japanese and Chinese who are the subjects of a foreign Government, are admitted on easy terms, while Indians, who own allegiance to the same King-Emperor, are in practice entirely excluded. It is a cruel irony that British citizenship should be a disqualification in Canada," says Mr. Macdonald. That is the satisfaction of belonging to the British "Commonwealth of Nations!" "The exclusive policy of Dominions was felt all the more keenly because it was also being pursued by the United States and the Imperial Government could not object to a foreign Government doing what its own Dominions were doing." (Idem, p. 217.) Still Indians are assured from time to time that the Commonwealth is built on the foundations of racial justice! Commenting on the numerous humiliating restrictions and discriminations against the Indians imposed by the other members of the "Commonwealth of Nations," Mr. Macdonald says:—"These impediments and prohibitions are, as a matter of fact, and are keenly felt by Indians to be, a grievous insult to their race." (P. 218.) Still they want the people of India to feel proud as members

of the Commonwealth of Nations! "The emotion of a white Australia, the fears of highly paid labour, racial antagonism, are all likely to persist and to make themselves felt in the future as they have done in the past. *If India had a sufficient power of self-government* to deal with matter itself, it would settle it in its way and would probably devise *some scheme of economic retaliation against offending States*, whilst prohibiting emigration under improper conditions." But there have been endless "negotiations" and "representations." The helplessness of the Indian administration in this matter has been one of the most pathetic things in Imperial history, while it is an equally significant comment on the principles of righteousness and justice of the English in other parts of the Empire. In the Empire, *colour and race* still appear to have the final word. The following comments of Mr. Macdonald on the problem made about two decades ago still have their significance. "The whole question, however, broadens itself out into a conflict between the Asiatic and the European races, and the champion of Asiatic side will be Japan and not India — the actual problem will be Chinaman and not the Hindu." But it is interesting to see the heathen fighting against the "Christian" powers for racial justice! "Regarding the conflicts which it is to raise, who can prophesy? This however, no one who knows the facts can doubt. Asia will not submit to exclusion from the North American Continent and the islands of the Pacific Seas, *and therefore exclusion is as short-sighted as it is unjust*. It is accumulating a weight of resentment which will one day be let loose and perhaps be the signal for the greatest conflict which the world has ever known." ("The Government of India, pp. 218-9.) There is profound

wisdom and ominous significance in those words. But when that racial or colour struggle breaks out Great Britain would have a very poor record to show. "Subjection to Great Britain in the Empire was tolerable; subjection to the Empire is intolerable," wrote Mr. R. Macdonald two decades back. It is however open to doubt even if the subjection to the Empire — since it is really a "*white*" Empire — is tolerable. "The Dominions have not said their last word to India, nor India its to the Dominions. The policy of mere exclusion will, however, have to be abandoned, and some agreement reached which, whilst giving the Dominions the legitimate protection they desire, *will not be insulting to India.*" (The Government of India.) The "*white*" races are living in a fool's paradise if they think that India and other coloured races will submit to the insult, to this crying indignity against their self-respect. The day of reckoning does not seem to be far.

"The discontent which permeates the coloured peoples has its roots in a dislike not of western institutions, but of the manner of their introduction," says a very penetrating English critic of western civilisation. But it is not so much the *manner* of their introduction as the *nature of their interpretation, application, and enforcement and working that has embittered the opinion of the "coloured" races*, including the people of India. The refusal of the South African whites — and white Christians at that — to consider the very moderate, and eminently just, demands of the Indian traders whom they have been deliberately and unjustly ousting from their legitimate fruits of past labours, call for redress to Heaven, since there is apparently no earthly power from which they can expect justice,

although the South African "white" Christians pray often — at least on Sundays — for mercy and forgiveness! The nervousness and impotence of the Imperial Government, which is a passive spectator in the racial tragedy, these are all parts of the same desperate racial malady, members of the same comprehensive racial family. Since the scope of the present work is concerned only with the nature of the racial relations in India, there is no need to digress on the conditions obtaining in South Africa. It is only with the idea of showing *the organic unity, the close connections*, between the different phases of the same ugly racial problem in the various parts of the British Empire — the only power which is threatened by this question to such an alarming extent, that a few references have been made to this aspect of the matter. This melancholy chapter in the history of racial relations may be closed with the words of an English writer. "The result of the policy of economic imperialism pursued by this country (Great Britain) and other imperialistic powers can hardly be viewed with satisfaction and equanimity," though there are some who are quite satisfied with it.

"Will the *white* race lose its supremacy of the world, through their treatment of the coloured races?" asked one of the contributors of the "Tropical Life." (December, 1912.) The same significant question may now be asked after two decades with greater appropriateness. The gravity of the present situation was adumbrated in another striking article which appeared in the "Round Table" on the "British Commonwealth Relations." (December, 1933.) "While in the tremendous ship-wreck of the Great War, Empires, institutions, ideas, irrecoverably foundered, the British Commonwealth of Nations" — what its "common wealth"

is one would like to know — whether it is intellectual or racial or economic or patriotic — “already more an institution than an Empire, more an idea than an institution, somehow remained afloat. The vessel that survives, it is often alleged, is a wreck scarcely worth salvage. Time and weather will soon demolish the leaky fabric of her separating timbers. To such observers the post-war conferences have been donkey-engines pumping water from a hull which fills twice as fast as they empty it, and which must eventually sink.” The salvage sought to be done at Ottawa was not a great success. Whether it will sink or not is not the scope of the present topic under discussion. There is one grave danger, that this seriously-impaired, colour-freighted craft, filled with its racial “impedimenta” would not be able to negotiate successfully the dangerous racial and economic shallows in the different parts of the Empire. From the Indian and imperial point of view it appears like a tremendous tragedy that the direction of the vessel should have been entrusted to the hands of some of the chauvinistic skippers. It is a great pity however, that on the grand and exalted imperial stage where the giants of old moved about, should strut some players who are embarrassed by a sense of their own self-importance. It is not a very auspicious sign for the British Empire that the mantle of statesmanship which had been worn by many eminent and deserving figures in the past should have fallen on the shoulders of some of the present day statesmen who shuffle themselves awkwardly in those ill-fitting garments.

What Mr. A. G. Fraser wrote more than two decades ago on the Indian question can be applied to the present day racial question also. “Much has been said



of political unrest. I would like you to realise that *political unrest is only one symptom of the greater general unrest*, the unrest which is artistic, literary, economic, intellectual, social, and religious." ("Christ and Indian Unrest." Addresses delivered at a Conference on "Foreign Missions and Social Problems," Liverpool, January 2nd—8th, 1912.) The unrest had been greatly aggravated and embittered by the *racial* factor also. Besides, when this writer made the above statement, Indian nationalism was not so assertive and clamorous as it is now. "How shall we resist *caste in India*, while we are cursed by class-jealousy and class contempt at home?" asked the Rev. W. Temple at the same conference in another address. But it is not so much the curse of the English "class system" "at home" that affects the message of Christianity in India, but the unchristian *caste system*, the *racial system*, which the English observe and maintain here.

What Mr. Cunningham, one of the ablest Anglo-English administrators, expressed about a century ago is still true in a great measure at the present time. "It is a fallacy to pretend that Britain has won the heart of India; the Indians acquiesce in, but they chafe at, her rule. Her task is still to seize upon the essential principles of that element which disturbs her multitudes of Indian subjects and imbue the mental agitation with new qualities of beneficent fertility." At the time when this distinguished English civilian wrote those words Indian nationalism was practically non-existent. The sense of racial injustice was altogether absent. Hence his words have greater importance now. But as long as the attitude of racial superiority continues, as it does at present, the possibilities of this consummation materialising are somewhat remote. As long

as the attitude of racial superiority is offensively manifested by the English people in India, the chances of a better understanding are greatly reduced.

"The Indian problem of all political problems is the most worthy of sustained attention," wrote Mr. Byron. Its political aspect is receiving the attention it deserves at the hands of the Indian and English politicians. But the *racial* aspect of the Indian problem has hardly suggested itself to many at all. But that is equally pressing and important, if not more, and it may justly claim the attention and study, the thoughtful allegiance of the best brains in the two countries. If the author of this work has even feebly succeeded in drawing the attention, the *immediate* attention, of the English here and in England to the present unsatisfactory character of the racial problem and to its many ugly aspects, and to the urgent need for adjustments, for improvement and conciliation, he would consider it an ample reward for the labour involved. *I am a firm believer in the immense possibilities of the beneficial connections between England and India*, though it is hardly possible to agree with the ordinary views and interpretations of the Conservatives in this matter. *With no offensive air of patronage and pride on the one hand, and no simmering sense of humiliation or resentment or injustice on the other, if the two parties could co-operate whole-heartedly for promoting the welfare of India, and for the maintenance of the Empire as a "real" Commonwealth of Nations—it is only now an English or a British Commonwealth—that is certainly "a consummation devoutly to be wish'd."*

The initiative in this difficult but praiseworthy task must come from the Englishman, and he will find to his surprise and satisfaction that the Indian does not

refuse, or rudely fail to grasp the hand of co-operation, though there are a good many Indians who are nursing bitter, if not vindictive, memories of past humiliation. But are the English people in India anxious for that, prepared for such an adjustment, keen on a change of racial heart, willing to abandon their present presumptuous attitude, ready to cultivate better relations with Indians like a Christian gentleman? Can the Anglo-Indian racial leopard change its spots? Are they able to minister to the English mind racially diseased, and can they pluck out this burning racial sorrow from Indian hearts? On the answer to these questions, — vital questions they are — depends *the safety of the position of the English in India, the peace of the country, and to a large measure the prosperity of the British Empire, and indirectly the peace of the world.* Whether the aggressive racial spirit of the English people in India would suffer from a gradual and mild death, form an euthenasia, or from violent and spasmodic convulsions shaking the whole Anglo-Indian frame, before its inevitable disappearance, depends entirely on the attitude of the English. How far the racial exotic would continue to thrive under the newly developing conditions, very few can boldly say. But the racial excrescence has already done enough of mischief.

The process of convincing the reason and appealing to the instincts of fair play of the English people in India on the racial problem, however, do not appear a very encouraging or a hopeful one. If one might judge from the tenor of their recent utterances in the Legislative Councils and on other occasions, they—at least some of them—do not seem to be over-anxious to cultivate the friendship of the people of India, with a

conciliatory or a gentlemanly attitude. They find it evidently difficult to get down from their superior racial heights. Most of them cannot dispense with the use of the racial overcoat. A few seem determined to remain incurable in their racial delusions, obstinate in their social prepossessions, irrepressible in the unwholesome energy with which they demand "safe-guards." It is often the same old petulant tone of undisguised contempt, or of veiled insolence, of condescending patronage, comfortable isolation, superior aloofness, grudging equality, of an offensive air of political martyrdom. The attitude of an hectoring schoolmaster, of a short-tempered pedagogue who likes to brandish the ferule, to use the chastising rod frequently, at the rebellious and ungrateful conduct of his disrespectful class, which is however immensely amused at the antics of the pompous dignitary — than whom it is difficult to imagine a more ludicrous figure — who nevertheless remains blissfully ignorant of the amusement provided for his pupils by his favourite and monotonous platitudes; may be seen reflected in the outlook of a good many among the English residents here. Some of these "Adullamites" are making strenuous efforts to seek refuge in the new and fragile ark of "safe-guards." Whether it will really protect them in the trying times ahead is a doubtful matter. But the hearts of some seem to have been hardened as in the case of Pharoah.

If the people of India have been "the first to revolt against this colour prejudice," as Mr. Byron says, then the English have occasion to be grateful, to thank their imperial stars just for the time being, though the people of India are often expected to *give* thanks rather than to *receive* them at the hands of the English! That

revolt, thanks to the intensely religious and moral fervour of its revered leader — Mahatma Gandhi — “the half-naked fakir”! — and the general aversion to violence on the part of the Indian which is a peculiar feature of eastern mentality since the days of Buddha, which has been the object of ridicule since the days of Macaulay, to some of the followers of Christ who condemned all forms of violence, is still running through non-violent channels. There are some occasional lapses from this high ideal no doubt. But when the extent of the country, the poverty and ignorance of the people, and the nature of the provocation the people had to put up with, in many cases, are remembered, it is really one of the marvels of the twentieth century. When the western Christians have been piling up armaments to fight and tear each other to pieces, here is a Hindu who has succeeded in disarming the feeling of bitterness and revenge, and keeping under the spell of his teaching millions of people. This is a lesson which some of the Christians of the West may take to heart. But how long the attitude would remain peaceful, in spite of the effects of such teachings, is a rather difficult matter to say now. To a large extent it is also intimately dependent on the attitude of the English. The present economic depression, the tragic middle-class unemployment in India which has reached such colossal dimensions, these and other matters are full of ominous possibilities. The materials for a volcanic eruption are there.

But the peaceful disposition of the people of the land, and their aversion to violence have been interpreted by “Christian” nations of Europe as a sign of weakness and degeneracy! One has to read through the essays of Macaulay on “Clive” and “Warren Hast-

ings" and through the speeches of some of the English politicians at the present time, to see that such is the attitude of most of the people of England and of America. In this connection it was highly significant and interesting to read through the letters that were recently exchanged between Prof. Gilbert Murray and Sir Rabindranath Tagore. Prof. Murray had written to the leading thinkers of the world to co-operate in the effort to draw together the bonds of intellectual union between the various nations to counteract the disruptive tendencies of modern rabid nationalism. He wanted to emphasise the *fundamental unity of the human race*, and to build the edifice of understanding on the *bed-rock of a common humanity*. After citing with regret instances of tactlessness and discourtesy in English contact with the people of India, Prof. Murray wrote that he need not make any elaborate appeal to the Poet for help in the formation of a "great League of Mind or Thought independent of miserable frontiers and tariff and government follies," and he could have added "racial pride and crime." While the idea is a good one, if the western representatives were to come with the current conception of their superiority in the present Dispensation, then there is not much chance for any good materialising. Dr. Tagore's reply is significant. He said that the whole of Asia to-day *denied the moral superiority of Europe, and that to withstand the ravages of Europe*, Asia "is preparing to imitate the ruthless aspect that slays, which eats raw flesh, which tries to make the swallowing process easier by putting the blame on the victim," as the wolf did in the case of the lamb. The great Poet admitted however, that western humanity "*when not affected by*

*its unnatural relationship with the East, preserves a singular strength of moral conduct in the domain of social life, which has its great inspiration for all of us."*

The whole situation cannot be better summed up than in those words. It is this "unnatural relationship" which the Poet has condemned in such appropriate and severe words, which I have been trying to expose in my own humble way from the racial side; and it is this "unnatural relationship" that is mainly responsible for the racial bitterness and tragedy of India at present. It is on the racial plane that the relations have assumed often the most monstrous forms, the most unchristian shapes, most revolting varieties. India appeals in all humility, but courage and resolution, for the removal of this blot on English character, against this stigma on western civilisation, against this insult to Indian self-respect, against this travesty of their religion, against this perversion of their own natural spirit of gentlemanliness, against this sin towards humanity and God. What the result of my present feeble appeal for fairness and racial charity Heaven alone knows. But one does not dare to envisage the future without some sign of repentance and change from the English side. The past is quite discouraging. The present is hardly reassuring. That the present conditions have a suicidal influence on the development of Indian national aspirations would be admitted by all unbiassed readers. "Subjection for a long time to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of national deterioration," observed Sir J. Seeley. ("Expansion of England.") "They become subjects who obey, not citizens who act. Their literature, their art, their spiritual expression go," said

Ramsay Macdonald. ("Awakening of India," p. 213.) There is a very corrosive and *degrading* influence on the outlook and character of the *conquerors* also, which is all the more deplorable and tragic in that these defects and vices are not looked upon as such, but, are even treated by some people as good qualities, positive virtues! "The British Empire to-day with its Indian appendage — with India held in subjection by force — is also a monstrosity. It can produce only bitterness, ever-increasing bitterness and estrangement, between India and England, *two peoples that ought to be friends*" said one of the leading writers in England.



## CHAPTER XXI

### *Conclusion*

For good or bad the destinies of the two countries have been thrown together. From the beginning of the 19th century, the close inter-relation between the domestic and foreign policy of England and that of India may be clearly noted. Whether it is to the economic chariot of British Imperialism, to the milder political, intellectual, and humanitarian car; India has been bound, and in many cases dragged along, in the past. "It is, we venture to think, clear to our readers," wrote Mr. R. C. Dutt, "that the marked progress in India between the date of Waterloo and the date of the accession of the Queen is intimately connected with, and is the result of, progress in England during the same period. In both countries abuses were removed, the government was improved, and the wise principle of carrying on the administration for the good of the people, and through the people, was recognised." ("England and India.") That the impetus provided by this reforming zeal was diverted to other channels also, may be seen from the literary activities of the period. Intellectual progress also kept pace with material improvements. "The brightest literary period in England within the present century is the period between Waterloo and the accession of the Queen, when Byron and Shelley wrote their finest poems, and Scott wrote his immortal novels, and when Dickens and Macaulay and Carlyle and a host of other brilliant

writers began their literary careers. And in India it was the period of Macaulay, Elphinstone, and Malcolm, of Tod and Grant Duff, of Bishop Heber and H. H. Wilson. Nor was this culture confined to Europeans alone. Indians imbibed liberal ideas, co-operated with Englishman in the cause of education and progress, and gave the first indications of that healthy modern literature which has been produced under British influence. Such are the far-reaching consequences of European progress on the advancement of India. Englishmen are familiar with the names of Brougham and Canning, of Russell and Grey, who led this progress at home. Nor should Englishmen cherish with less veneration or less affection the names of equally great and good men who spread the light of European progress and culture in the Far East, who recognised the natural rights of the people of India, who elevated their status, *and who confided in their loyal co-operation in the cause of good government.* Greatest among these, the people of India cherish the names of Munro, Elphinstone and Bentinck." (R. C. Dutt: "England and India," p. 60.)

The close connection between the political developments and social changes in England, and similar changes in India may be seen from the history of the two countries during the nineteenth century and at present. The missionary enthusiasm of Macaulay for Western education and Western institutions and everything Western cannot be properly understood or judged apart from the general currents which agitated contemporary life in England. The "Reform Act," and the Abolition of Slavery, the Emancipation of the Catholics, these and other political and humanitarian movements had awakened the interest and enthusiasm

of the English people. Macaulay and others like Wilberforce were honestly and firmly persuaded that the best thing for India was the introduction of Western institutions, that the only tonic for her was Western civilisation. So we find a similar attitude animating the conduct of the administrators in India at that time. This close inter-action is not without its good and bad aspects for India.

It would be interesting to compare the conditions a century later. India seems to have become more and more the shuttle-cock of English party politics. Her foreign policy, her currency policy, her commercial policy, and her constitutional progress have been dependent on the currents and under-currents of English political life. This has its good and bad aspects. It is not possible for India to move in an orbit of her own. Whether the modern leaders of political life in England have the same outlook and spirit and vision as those of the nineteenth century statesmen, it is a difficult matter to decide. But, the fact remains none the less true, that the fate of India is in the hands of an alien electorate, and that it is influenced by all the forces that affect the course of development in England.

While during the last century the administrative measures and the foreign policies of the different ministries in England produced their subtle, and sometimes unperceived, influence on Indian conditions, it is also a fact that *the material, the economic, the commercial progress of England, has been intimately bound up with Indian conditions*. The capital invested in India in the different industries and plantations, the trade with India, enabled England to out-distance her European rivals. If there was no Indian market,

no Indian raw materials, and other economic facilities, one can more or less imagine the condition of England. Yet, the English people have been so much obsessed with the other side of the picture — to some of them there is only one side — so firmly persuaded that India stands to suffer if there is any weakening of the Imperial bond! I am not insinuating that but for India England would never have come to occupy her present position, or that India would have reached her present state. One merely wants to draw attention to the important fact that when the English harp only on the good they have done — and that they have done an immense amount of good intellectually, economically, and constitutionally to the country, no one denies — when they emphasise merely the unilateral nature of the bonds and obligations, they are partly guilty of injustice to themselves, but more to India. It is this tendency to dwell only on one side of the picture, a natural temptation, no doubt, that creates all the irritation. It inevitably encourages them in their pharisaical attitude and to say, "*Behold! what all grand things we have done for you.* And is this the reward, the recompense for all our self-sacrificing labours? Can any one think of a *more ungrateful set of people than you?*" Of course, they do not say it out bluntly. That seems to be the attitude of the vast majority. But this line of approach is one of the most *formidable obstacles* in the path of friendly understanding. Are the English people really anxious for a change, prepared for an improvement on the existing state of affairs, willing to abandon their irritating attitude, conscious of the social injury and racial injustice they are causing, prepared to make "amende honourable" for the past wrongs?

*"Common sense and good-will are our shield and buckler. We have kept, despite the difficulties, our heritage of liberty alike for the individual and for our many constituent races,"* remarked His Majesty in the course of his reply to the addresses presented by the Dominions and India on 8th May. But it is only with *a thorough change in the racial outlook of the English in India*, that the just sentiments contained in His Majesty's words can be translated into deeds. One cannot help recalling the wise words of John Stuart Mill, the profound thinker and writer, "that no intention, however sincere, of protecting the interests of others, can make it safe or salutary to tie up their own hands" . . . . . *"By their own hands* only can any positive and durable improvement of their circumstances in life be worked out." However well-meaning the English may be, and however disinterested their efforts for the improvement of India may be, unless they have the *full and hearty co-operation of the people of the land*, these can never produce their richest results. This will be forthcoming only in proportion to the trust and confidence that the English have in the Indians; and there can never spring up any confidence or trust between the two parties unless the English people *are prepared to treat the people of the land on a footing of equality*, unless they give up the present attitude of aloofness, suspicion, and superiority. I wish I had more eloquence to convince some of the reasonable English people of the truth of this apparently simple, but vitally important truth.

The "Madras Mail" writing on 17th June, 1935, just a few days back, observed very aptly that there was too much of this "superiority complex" in India. "There is the "superiority complex" of the Englishman to-

wards the Anglo-Indian, of the "Anglo-Indian" towards the Indian, of those who had been to prison for their political activities towards those who haven't and so on." Unfortunately, there is a good deal of truth in those observations. I am not anxious to complicate these "complexes" by bringing in other types. As the Editor of the "Madras Mail" has humorously remarked, it is a very "complex subject." *"There is no rational cause for pride involving contempt of others, in having been born in Britain, or sentenced to imprisonment for law-breaking. . . . But it is unlikely that an improvement of relations will be brought about by talking of superiority complexes. . . . It would seem therefore that superiority complexes may best be overcome by counter-assertiveness and pride by denying its right exist."* But the pity of it is that the Indian has few *chances* for "self-assertiveness!"

A more charitable spirit, a more gentlemanly approach, a more accommodating attitude, and a better Christian temper than that which is generally manifested in the English papers, books, and by some of the English politicians, and by the English residents in India, would be necessary to solve the racial tangle. The English have to change some of their common expressions about India's "incompetence," her "inferiority," and the "inviolable rights" of Churchill, the "sacred trust" of "The Times" and other papers — it would be interesting to hear from whom they have received this "trust" and to whom and when they are going to render an account of this "trust!" — and other expressions which have created a nauseating sensation in the Indian mind. Some of them would do well to settle down to more substantial work than mere destructive criticism. In this con-

nection, one must acknowledge one's admiration for the remarkable way in which *Parliament is engaged now in the Herculean task of framing a constitution for India. Although there may be differences of opinion on some of the subjects discussed, the patience, perseverance, and determination to do their best under the circumstances, are really creditable.* But the utterances of people like Capt. Ellam, that "a troupe of comical clowns could not make greater fools of themselves than the leaders of the Swaraj party have succeeded in doing," and this writer and some of the Jingoists have actually done—or of the late Lord Birkenhead, "that such is the distressing record of incompetence and corruption which already accompany the increased responsibility of Indians in their own affairs," and of the constant stream of bitter criticism that flows from some of the English newspapers, these are not in the least calculated to heal the existing breach. Some of these thoughtless, uncharitable, and provocative utterances will have the sure result of exasperating Indian sentiments, and of embittering the relations between the two countries, of alienating moderate opinion, of playing into the hands of the extremists. Such verbal "lathis" are lost on the thick-skinned Indians! But if the English are anxious to see a more reasonable frame of mind, a more conciliatory attitude in the "Indian partner," then it is necessary for the English "partner" to avoid some of these insulting expressions, to give up the jarring attitude of arrogance and presumption. If only some of these people would remember that there is a Power which gives to every man and to every nation according to his or its merits, then the people of India have less cause to be apprehensive in the matter when the time

of reckoning comes!

May I also humbly remind my *countrymen* at the same time, that they are also involved indirectly in the matter. As long as they are active or passive supporters of the *caste system* in India, which is the greatest blot on India's honour and fair name, the greatest hindrance to her real improvement; that as long as they tolerate this, and do not struggle constantly and manfully against it, they have no business to grumble or show their finger of scorn at the English caste system. The existence of the English system is favoured by the Indian one. *The western racial creeper has flourished only because of the shelter and nourishment provided by the Indian tree.* If the roots of the vicious Indian system are pulled up, the English counterpart must also languish. It is up to the people of the land, to the higher castes, the Brahmins, who have a grave responsibility in the matter, to remove more speedily and effectively this blot on their reputation, this stigma on their religion. When we bury the Indian caste system we shall be digging the grave of the English variety also. It is the defect of the Indian caste system that the western variety has so long flourished. The Indian caste system in its ever so many subtle and poisonous forms has really proved *the greatest traitor to the cause of India's freedom, the great obstacle to her progress, the greatest stigma on her reputation.* Yet it is pathetic to see a good proportion of the higher castes in India still trying to perpetuate the pernicious vestiges of this system. At the same time they are agitating for "democratic" form of government, for self-government! *Democracy and caste are as much opposed as light and darkness.* It is amusing to see some of the "higher" castes hug-



ging the caste system closely and at the same time demanding democratic government! Without *social* democracy, *political* democracy — that is, democracy as a form of government, cannot hope to succeed. It is high time that the whole situation changed.

Some of the English people might justly say that, after all, the Indians are *equally suffering from the effects of colour prejudice*. Among them also one finds to a great extent the same *contempt for the dark tint*. The people from the North of India look down on the dark-skinned Dravidians of the South. Even in the South one finds the same outlook among the different communities and castes. While that is an unfortunate fact, revealing a peculiarity of human psychology all the world over, there are certain differences between the two cases. In the case of the Indians it never reaches any *irritating and obnoxious lengths*. Besides, *political* and other matters come to be mixed up in the case of the English caste system. Further, the conditions are rapidly changing in India. But it looks as if the English caste system is safely entrenched here.

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the fact that the racial problem is primarily, fundamentally, a *psychological* problem. *The administration cannot do anything for it directly*. The complaint requires more of a proper medicinal treatment than a surgical operation. But most of the English people seem not to have understood the correct nature of the complaint; and so there is nothing surprising in the fact that the remedies applied are wrong, and the treatment faulty. Unless the English revise their method of approach to the racial question, there is very little hope of their successfully tackling this vexed matter. It is to be hoped that they would realise the gravity and the

urgency of the situation even though it is a bit late in the day. There is a tide in the affairs of individuals and of nations which taken on the flood, may lead on to peace and happiness and fortune, but if omitted it is bound to end in "shallows and miseries."

There is also another significant thing connected with the racial question. However grand and noble the achievements of the English in India may be, *this one serious defect*, this general and wide-spread complaint, is likely to detract from the attractiveness, the utility, and the permanence of their other work. As Hamlet says:—

".....the stamp of one defect,  
Being nature's livery or fortune's star,  
Their virtues else, be they pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo,  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault."

("Hamlet," Act 1, Sc. iv.)

So unless the English people in India are prepared to remedy the existing state of affairs in the racial plane, it is not improbable that their obstinacy or short-sightedness and false sense of prestige in this particular matter may neutralise considerably, compromise irretrievably, the magnificent qualities of their varied accomplishments. That would be a great tragedy indeed.

The words of the great liberal statesman, Gladstone, may be applied to the present conditions in India. During the occasion of the second reading of the Reform Bill which was introduced in the year 1866, he said:—"Time is on our side. The great social factors which in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does not for a moment impede or disturb, those great and powerful social factors

are against you; they are marshalled on our side; and the banner in which we now carry on this fight, though perhaps at some moments it may droop from our sinking hands, yet it will soon float in the eye of Heaven, and it will be borne by the firm hands of the united people of the three kingdoms, perhaps not to an easy, but to a certain, and to not far distant victory." The same may be said of the *racial struggle* in India. Though "freedom's banner is torn and bleeding," as the poet puts it — and the racial banner is badly soiled and mutilated — still India is sure to emerge victorious in this ethnic struggle. The great moral forces and principles of justice and equity are arrayed on her side. But it is a great irony of history, one of the greatest *tragedies* of Indian and English connections, that this struggle has to be waged *against those very people who won their political and democratic victories against their oligarchic masters*. According to John Bright "Righteousness exalteth a nation." How far racial righteousness has exalted the English name in India, history will answer!

One cannot do better than quote the words of Mr. Attlee's Draft which he submitted to the "Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform." "In conclusion we would urge that in inaugurating another stage in the history of the connection between this country and India we should, above all things, endeavour to exercise *the utmost generosity*. We are convinced that the only real safeguard for British interests in India is *the goodwill of the Indian people* . . . . . We have tried to meet, with a full sense of sympathy and responsibility, what we conceive to be the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of India. *We believe that in the future as in the past men and*

women of our own race will be of service in helping India on the path of progress and that the bonds of friendship between the two peoples will in no way be weakened but strengthened by India becoming an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations." ("Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform." Vol. 1, Part II, pp. 283-84.) The same note was struck by Mr. Baldwin. "All the safeguards are being examined by the Joint Select Committee, but whatever safeguards we have, *the real safeguard is the maintenance of goodwill. If there is not a basis of goodwill, your trade will eventually wither away*, and I regret to say that some of the measures which have been suggested and which Lancashire people have been asked to support, have, in my judgment, been calculated to *destroy rather than to further any possibility of that goodwill between Lancashire and India which we can get, and which we ought to get, and which we cannot do without.*" (Idem, p. 283.) It is also interesting to read through the following comments of "The Times" on the matter. "The boycott has died away . . . . . by a conviction in the minds of the Indians themselves *that we are going to deal honourably with them and keep our word about getting on with the reforms.*" (30th June 1933.) Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru sums up the situation admirably in his Memorandum. "*The best safeguard that Lancashire, or for the matter of that England, can have for trade and commerce in India, is the goodwill of the people of India.*" ("Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, Vol. 1, Part II, p. 283.) One can bring in many other remarks from Indian and English leaders on more or less the same lines. But the point is quite obvious. It is difficult to think of any partner-

ship, of any honourable co-operation, any goodwill between the two countries as long as the *present attitude of racial contempt continues to warp the outlook of the English in India*. The English people in India cannot do a greater disservice to their own interests, cannot impair the bonds of partnership more disastrously, than by perpetuating the present deplorable state of affairs. It is to be sincerely hoped that wisdom and moderation would re-assert themselves ere it is too late.

It is a matter for *sincere regret* to me that the scope of the present work excludes from its limits an account of the many *good and beneficial things* which the English have done for India. Admiring as one does the practical instincts and the constitutional genius of the English in their own native country as shown in the history of their constitution, the beauty of their literature, and the grand achievements of their scientists, artists and musicians; it does give one a *good deal of pain* to dwell only on the unfavourable aspect of English history and connections, and English character in India. The duty of "Advocatus Diaboli" (Devil's Advocate) in this racial history has been discharged with considerable reluctance and not a little of regret; and but for the urgency of the matter and the pressing importance of the whole question, and a sincere desire to improve the relations between the English and the people of India, so that they may be governed by principles of justice and righteousness, and not by exasperating insolence and short-sighted racialism, I would not have dared to write on this topic. All are anxious that the existing relations should be improved. But a good many of the English are ignorant of the obstacles in the way. One is firmly con-

vinced that this *preliminary work of clearance* is an important duty at the present time. I am second to none in my admiration of some of the splendid qualities of the English race, qualities which have made them what they are at present. It is the corruption or perversion of the best that is more deplorable than the deterioration of the bad. Nor am I forgetful of the many splendid things which the English have done for India.

Two main considerations have influenced my method of approach and treatment of the racial problem. For one thing, mere flattery and injudicious and indiscriminate praise is not the best thing for an individual or a community or a nation. It would be very pleasant, no doubt, to hear oneself praised and flattered. There would be a good many people who are prepared to do that, and who are still doing it, since it is a more attractive, and in most cases, a more profitable, and remunerative task, as one can see about him. But if the praise is not really deserved, or when praising, the defects are not at all mentioned, then that procedure may do more *harm* than good. Sometimes it is good to see ourselves as others see us. The English historians, writers and politicians, have been busy showing what they think about India and the Indians. It will not be a bad thing for some of the English people to be told as to what some of the Indians are thinking of them.

There is also another reason why I have taken for treatment this aspect of the relations between England and India. *The good and bright side has been told by many English* and a few Indian writers more eminent and competent than myself. What William D. Arnold, the brother of Mathew Arnold, wrote of the Indian

conditions during the nineteenth century is true of the present also. "Our government is purely secular, and thus while there can be very little doubt of the very great relief which British rule has given to this country, though it is certain that there is a *growing desire to treat the natives well*," — the desire is there all right, nobody denies it, — and the spirit is willing though the flesh is weak! — "to improve the country physically, to improve the courts of justice, and so on; and though I fully admit that these are great blessings, (a great deal more than can be said of most governments), yet I maintain that to a Government that has no ideal than all this, the words "great" or "noble" are misapplied. There is an utter want of nobility in the Government of India; it still retains the marks of its commercial origin. The good, as has been said a thousand times, is great; it consists in vigour, force, energy, a terrestrial justice infinitely better than a lawless rapine, and politic benevolence; but the evil, though less talked about, is great also, and no less certainly exists. *The evil is a money-getting earthly mind that dares to view a large portion of God's world, and many millions of God's creatures, as a more or less profitable investment, as a good return for money laid out upon them, as a providential asylum for younger sons.* Is there any spirit of philosophy, of poetry, of godliness in the Anglo-Indian mind?" asks the hero of Arnold's novel "Oakfield." The questions may be asked even now. Mathew Arnold's brother, William D. Arnold, had admirable chances for knowing the merits of the Anglo-Indian administration, since he was in India for some time in the service of the East India Company. "Oakfield," the novel wherein William Arnold deals with the nature of the govern-

ment, is more or less an autobiography. Mathew Arnold mourns the death of his brother who was not destined to see his native land, since he died on his way back at Gibraltar on sick leave, in the following lines in his poem "A Southern Night."

"For there with bodily anguish keen  
With Indian heats at last fordone,  
With public toil, and private teen  
Thou sank'st alone."

The achievements of the English in India certainly constitute a brilliant chapter in the history of modern India, of which any country may be justly proud. The suppression of inhuman rites and practices consecrated by tradition and sanctified by superstition, the gradual drawing out of the natural resources of the land, the linking up of the different parts of the country, and imparting to what was purely a "geographical expression" a unity and cohesion unknown in all its past history, the fairly successful fight against famine and disease, the initiation of splendid schemes of agricultural improvements like irrigation works, the co-operative movement, etc., the encouragement of various humanitarian and educational measures, the infusion into the inert and amorphous Indian mass something of the glow of British initiative and freedom, the building up of a remarkably efficient system of administration; these and many others would remain imperishable monuments to the usefulness and value and greatness of British connections. All these and other blessings are matters of common knowledge and need not be detailed here.

The whole case has been admirably summed up by the "Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms." "The record of British rule in India is well



known. Though we claim neither infallibility nor perfection, since like all systems of Government, it has, at times, fallen into error, it is well to remember the *greatness of its achievement*. It has given to India that which throughout the centuries she has never possessed, a Government whose authority is unquestioned in any part of the sub-continent; it has barred the way against the foreign invader and has maintained tranquillity at home; it has established the rule of law, and, by the creation of a just administration and an upright judiciary, it has secured to every subject of His Majesty in British India the right to go in peace about his daily work and to retain for his own use the fruit of his labours. The ultimate agency in achieving these results has been the power wielded by Parliament." (Volume 1, Part II, p. 524.)

There is also another aspect of the problem which may be mentioned here. The vast majority of the people in India are still *grateful for the many services which the English have rendered in the past and are rendering at present*. But the pleasant memories of these services are being rapidly marred by the *provocative and petty-minded attitude of superiority that some of the English cannot help showing whenever there is a chance*. Most of the English seem to be still living in an India of the *nineteenth century* and are unwilling to take note of the forces and currents that now agitate India. *It is not that the people of India are forgetful of the past, but that the English appear to be unconscious of the present developments*. Human nature being what it is, it remembers more the insults, the humiliations of the present, than the services of the past.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the splendid

services rendered by the English. But if the mansion of English occupation is to be an *attractive* one also, — it is a *useful* one now — if it also to appeal to the Indian imagination by its fairness and justice, then the rough exterior has to be white-washed, so that the whole edifice might appear beautiful. As long as these final touches are not given, the beauty and value, and even the permanence of the whole structure will be compromised. Will the architects give these final touches also? The interior seems to be very grandly furnished. But the exterior presents a very untidy and clumsy appearance, a repelling aspect.

The words of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, one of the greatest sons of India, who has succeeded in assimilating to a wonderful extent the best elements in western and Indian culture, are worth quoting in this connection. "Come inside India, accept all her good and evil; if there be deformity, then try to cure it from within, but see it with your own eyes, understand it, think over it, turn your eyes towards it, and become one with it." ("Gora": p. 103.) But hitherto the general tendency has been to abuse it from a safe, pharisaical distance, to see it with other people's eyes, to turn one's face towards it only when one wanted to criticise it. "By the soul only shall the nations be great and free. The sword . . . . can give no rights," said Sir Oliver Lodge. ("The War and After," p. 32.) A true but very unpalatable saying. "*Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.*" goes the Latin saying. (The times are changed and we with them.) But are the English in India capable of such a natural, graceful, and easy adaptability in their racial outlook? "On everything doth Mutabilitie reign," says Spenser in "*Faerie Queene*."

"Yea, Truth, Justice then  
Will down return to men  
Orbed in a rainbow,

says Milton in "Morning of Christ's Nativity." Will racial justice come down like that in Indian social life?

- "To conclude, I announce what comes after me.  
I announce justice triumphant;  
I announce uncompromising liberty and equality;  
I announce the identity of these states is single identity only;  
I announce the union more and more compact indissoluable;
- I announce splendours and majesties to make all previous politics of earth insignificant,"

sang Walt Whitman. ("Leaves of Glass".)

In India, however, such sounds are hardly audible. Whether through the hill-tops of Time one can see the faint light of a distant dawn glimmering in the horizon, and beginning to illuminate the Anglo-Indian social landscape, dissipating the mists of racial arrogance in which it is now enveloped, is a difficult question to which the present signs and tendencies give only a somewhat dubious and pessimistic answer. But it is to be fervently hoped that the English people with their feelings of justice and fair play, temporarily submerged though these may be in the Indian racial scene, would try to make up for the past by their future conduct. One is reminded of the beautiful lines in Newman's hymn.

"Lead Kindly Light amidst the encircling gloom  
Lead Thou me on;  
The night is dark and I am far from home  
Lead Thou me on."

Similarly, through the dense racial mists that have settled down on the social view in India spoiling the normal vision of the English, a more than human power seems to be necessary to guide them to their proper and happy destination.

"I recognise that the day when Britain was top-dog in the Far East has passed; and all I can say is that if Japan is going to be top-dog, we have to make sure that she leaves some room for us, wrote Sir Frederick Whyte, an ex-President of the Indian Legislative Assembly, on 29th May, 1935, in "The Listener"—an English Radio magazine. It may be also said that the days when the English have been top-dogs in India *racially* are disappearing fast and there is likely to be a good deal of snarling and fighting between the two breeds unless there is a change in the outlook.

"The West needs the East as the East needs the West. Right treatment of Asiatics by white men," — and right treatment of Indians by the English here — "at this juncture will surely avert the anticipated race collision," says Mr. Sidney L. Gulick in his book ("The American Japanese Problem," p. 9.) Similarly, it may be also said that India wants the help of England, as England wants that of India. Then why not the two parties get on in a *more friendly* manner, behave in a more charitable way, with no sense of pride and patronage which is so jarring to the Indian mind? But as long as some of the mistaken and mischievous sentiments which Kipling expressed shape the outlook of the English, there is very little chance of an amicable and an honourable understanding between the two parties.

"Oh, East is East, and West is West,  
And never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently,  
At God's great Judgment Seat."

That meeting at God's Judgment Seat would be something entirely different from the present day meeting, and it would be interesting to watch the way in which

the final accounts would be settled! What is urgently needed is a new orientation of the racial outlook, a fresh, friendly, and unprejudiced approach to the racial and other problems, a more hearty co-operation in the administrative and every day ordinary dealings, a more charitable treatment of the Indians and of other coloured races. The fight for power in the Far East is not yet ended. The balance of power has not yet reached a stable equilibrium, the policy of Japan having rendered it very uncertain. When England is thus directly or indirectly involved in an attempt to preserve her present position in the Far East, will it be *wise on her part* to have an India which is brooding over the bitter memories of racial insult and of other wrongs? The political centre of gravity has shifted from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and in the new phase, India holds a *unique* position, can play a decisive part; and what that will be depends entirely on the Imperial outlook and policy of the English here and in England. That the moves in the Far Eastern diplomatic chequer-board are going on swiftly and astutely, any one who watches the trend of present day events can easily see. The end of the game is not yet in sight.

One cannot do better than conclude the whole thing in the memorable words of Burns:

"Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will for a' that,  
That Sense and Worth o'er a' the earth  
May bear the gree and a' that!  
For a' that, an' a' that,  
It's coming yet for a' that,  
That Man to Man the World o'er  
Shall Brithers be for a' that."

Will the "*Britisher*" and the Indian like "*brithers be*" in India?



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